

Inconvenient History

A Quarterly Journal for Free Historical Inquiry

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VOLUME 2 · NUMBER 1 · 2010

EDITORIAL

Barriers to Historical Accuracy

Richard A. Widmann

Harry Elmer Barnes is a controversial figure whose memory is blurred both by his detractors and his supporters. His long and distinguished career crossing many subjects and interests is often left in the shadows of his historical revisionism. Even much of his revisionist work, which began in the years following World War One and continued through the Cold War, are forgotten in light of his work to debunk the myths of World War Two.

The emotions stirred by World War Two remain high. To question any aspect of this conflict still meets solid resistance and *ad hominem* attacks. Barnes once wrote that in the minds of anti-revisionists the term “revisionism” savors of malice and vindictiveness. Barnes’s few brief statements regarding the Holocaust, his positive book review of Paul Rassinier’s trail-blazing work, *The Drama of the European Jews*, and his involvement in the publication of a few early Holocaust revisionist titles have resulted in wild attacks on his character from the anti-revisionist crowd.

In Deborah Lipstadt’s highly acclaimed screed, *Denying the Holocaust*, she charges that Barnes was anti-Semitic.¹ She also charges Barnes with twisting “information and misrepresent[ing] established historical fact.”² She claims that Barnes sought to exculpate Nazi Germany and even questions his standing as a historian.³ The widely read (and highly inaccurate) on-line encyclopedia Wikipedia goes even further. The anti-revisionists who edit Wikipedia call Barnes a “Holocaust Denier” and a “Nazi Sympathizer.”⁴

Barnes’s memory has also suffered from some of his supporters. The magazine that is emblazoned with his name changed its byline several years back to “A Journal of Nationalist Thought & History.”⁵ The association suggests that Barnes would not only embrace nationalist thought but somehow was a major proponent of such a movement. The truth is quite the opposite.

Barnes addressed the subject of the relationship between nationalism and historical writing in his *History and Social Intelligence* (1926). After running through a brief history of the importance of nationalism on world history, Barnes addressed the impact of nationalism on the writing of history. Barnes considered the nationalist movements in several nations including Germany, France, England, and the United States. Barnes was very negative about the impact of such writing including the work of Houston Stewart Chamberlain and those he called “the blatant Teutonists.”

Barnes described the impact of nationalism on historical writing as:⁶

“The net result of the growth of nationality and of nationalism upon historiography has been greatly varied and a mixed blessing. Its fortunate results have been, above all, the provision of great collections of source material which otherwise would never have been made available and the training of many excellent historians in the process of the compilation and editing of the sources. The deplorable effects have centered about the creation of a dangerous bias of patriotism, which not only prevented a calm, objective and accurate handling of historical facts, even by highly trained historians, but also contributed in no small degree to the great increase in chauvinism which led to the calamity of 1914.”



Harry Elmer Barnes. His memory has become a battleground. Published with permission from Revisionists.com.

There is little doubt that Barnes sought to write history that was free from bias. While such objectivity may be ultimately unattainable, it was his goal nonetheless. He viewed patriotism and nationalism as but two of the barriers to truth and accuracy in history. Today one is well-advised that not only is adherence to these movements a barrier to truth in history, but adherence to firm anti-patriotic and anti-nationalism is likewise. Lipstadt, in but one example of her complete denial of self-awareness, charges that Barnes’s “incorrect” views about the Holocaust and Israel result from his Germanophilia, his revisionist approach to history and his anti-Semitism. Few con-

sider, least of all Lipstadt, that inaccurate views about the Holocaust and Israel also result from Germanophobia, an anti-Revisionist approach to history, pro-Semitism and, particularly in her case, sources of funding.

The memory of Harry Elmer Barnes is a battleground. To the anti-Revisionists, Barnes was full of malice and the unholy desire to smear the saviors of mankind. For revisionists he was one of the first to discredit misleading historical myths that form a barrier to peace and goodwill among nations. Perhaps both groups should turn from what others have to say about Barnes and reconsider the vast collection of writings that he himself penned.

In this issue of INCONVENIENT HISTORY we attempt to efface several historical myths. Several articles consider elements of the Holocaust story. Thomas Dalton offers the first part of his detailed analysis of Joseph Goebbels's statements about the Jews. Editorial Advisor Carlo Mattogno considers *Sonderkommando* Shlomo Venezia's testimonies about the Gas Chambers of Birkenau. Thomas Kues offers a detailed look at the memoirs of Chil Rajchman. Paul Grubach writes about the stake that various non-Jewish entities have in supporting the Holocaust myth. The topic of whether the atomic bombings of Japan were necessary, or an example of an Allied war crime, is considered by Joseph Bishop. In addition, we have two interesting book reviews. I have reviewed David Irving's *Banged Up!*, which recounts his imprisonment for thoughtcrimes in Austria. L.A. Rolins offers an insightful look at *Christopher Hitchens and His Critics*.

Notes

- ¹ Deborah Lipstadt, *Denying the Holocaust*, Plume, New York, 1994, p. 80
- ² *Ibid.*, p. 79.
- ³ *Ibid.*, p. 82.
- ⁴ Online: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harry_Elmer_Barnes
- ⁵ The first issue of *The Barnes Review* (October 1994) had the byline "To Bring History into Accord with the Facts." This byline was in place for several years and was certainly representative of Barnes's thinking.
- ⁶ Harry Elmer Barnes, *History and Social Intelligence*, The Revisionist Press, New York, 1972, p. 215.

PAPERS

Goebbels on the Jews, Part 1

Thomas Dalton

Joseph Goebbels was nothing if not disciplined. Since his 26th birthday in late 1923, he maintained a near-daily diary until his death more than 21 years later.¹ These entries are at once unique and invaluable in their ability to provide insight into the Nazi hierarchy, ideology, and operation. Nothing else like them exists. No other leading Nazi figure recorded such personal and intimate thoughts on an on-going basis throughout the war. Hitler's *Mein Kampf* was written in 1923 and 1924, but he published nothing later. The comments recorded in *Hitler's Table Talk* (1953) are the closest to Goebbels's writings, but these cover in detail only the period July 1941 to September 1942, and they furthermore have not much to add to the topic at hand. We of course have the speeches by Hitler, Goebbels, Himmler and other leading figures, but such words were designed for an intended effect and did not necessarily give an honest and unvarnished representation of ideas or events. Goebbels's diaries were held private for his entire life. He never intended to publish them, although he clearly expected them to survive the war as a permanent record of his thoughts, for posterity. They offer us an irreplaceable look at Nazi history and evolution, the lead-up to and conduct of the war, and, especially, Nazi policy on the Jews.

Having earned his PhD in history and philology at Heidelberg in 1921, Goebbels first encountered Hitler in Munich the next year. He joined the NSDAP in 1924, and began editing an early Nazi newspaper in 1925. Goebbels quickly earned the attention of Hitler, and was named *Gauleiter* (district leader) of Berlin in October 1926. He founded a major Nazi periodical, *Der Angriff*, in 1927, and by 1929 was named Reich Propaganda Minister. Goebbels was thus well-placed by the time Hitler and the NSDAP acceded to power in 1933. He was the most intelligent and well-educated of the Nazi leaders.² In a very short time Goebbels, along with Hitler and Göring, came to comprise the leadership 'trinity' of the early Nazi party. As the war progressed Göring fell from grace, leaving Goebbels as the de facto second-in-command of the Third Reich. He eclipsed even Himmler, who was in the end more an enforcer than a leader. Into the

1940s, Goebbels “was the most important and influential man after Hitler [...B]y 1943, he was virtually running the country while Hitler was running the war.”³ Thus Goebbels was uniquely situated to comment on, and help resolve, the Jewish Question (*Judenfrage*). To this end, his diaries are absolutely essential for understanding the Jewish holocaust.

The diaries themselves first surfaced a few years after the war. An unknown scavenger came upon the bundles of originals—some 7,000 pages in total—in the ruins of the official German archives. Pages were burned, soaked, and many were missing. They “passed through several hands,” eventually becoming acquired by an

American diplomat.⁴ In 1948 a (very) partial English translation by Louis Lochner appeared, on selected entries from 1942 and 1943. Unknown at the time, the Soviets had acquired a full set of glass plate prints of the entire diary series, amounting to roughly 75,000 individual sheets. By various obscure means, portions leaked out over the years. Then in 1992, David Irving (re)discovered the full set in the Soviet archives, and was able to fill in all the missing gaps. These were put to good use in his 1996 work *Goebbels: Mastermind of the Third Reich*—the only complete biography published to date.

Today, there are four English translations of different parts of the diary: (1) the original Lochner translation; (2) Oliver Watson’s “early entries,” from the years 1925-1926; (3) Fred Taylor’s translation of the period 1939-1941; and (4) Richard Barry’s “final entries” of 1945. These four books combined constitute not more than 10% of the total; a full 90% of the diaries have never appeared in English.

Fortunately, though, with Irving’s 1992 discovery, the German publisher Saur was able to produce a complete and authoritative set, in the original German: *Die Tagebücher von Joseph Goebbels*. The full set runs to 29



Joseph Goebbels 1942. Photo is in the public domain. Source: Wikimedia Commons.

volumes of roughly 500 pages each, and is divided into 2 parts (or *Teils*): Part 1 from 1923-1941, and Part 2 from 1941-1945. The final volume was released only in 2006, and so the complete set is still relatively new to researchers. Very few have made good use of it.

Of particular interest here are Goebbels's disclosures about Nazi policy toward a final solution (*Endlösung*) of the Jewish Question, which of course directly relate to our conception of the Holocaust. On the standard view, the entire Nazi leadership, Hitler above all, were rabid anti-Semites who would settle for nothing less than the mass murder of every Jew they could get their hands on. They allegedly pursued this objective even to the detriment of the war effort, and rounded up and gassed Jews until the final few months. Their alleged 6 million victims were burned, buried, or otherwise made to vanish, such that traces of a mere fraction of these bodies have ever been found.

There are, as we know, many problems with this account. First is the fact that no 'extermination order' from Hitler has ever been discovered—nor even any tangible reference to such.⁵ Hilberg was reduced to nonsense in his "mind-reading" statement of 1983,⁶ and even as late as 2003 he was compelled to write:

"The process of destruction [...] did not, however, proceed from a basic plan. [...] The destruction process was a step-by-step operation, and the administrator could seldom see more than one step ahead. [...] In the final analysis, the destruction of the Jews was not so much a product of laws and commands as it was a matter of spirit, of shared comprehension, of consonance and synchronization." (2003: 50-52)

Even preeminent British Hitler expert Ian Kershaw could not do much better. The Soviet archives were opened up in the early 1990s; "predictably, a written order by Hitler for the 'Final Solution' was not found. The presumption that a single explicit written order had ever been given had long been dismissed by most historians" (2008: 96). Rather, this most momentous destruction of human life occurred via "improvised bureaucratic initiatives whose dynamic prompted a process of 'cumulative radicalization' in the fragmented structures of decision-making in the Third Reich" (p. 94)—a statement hardly more coherent than Hilberg's.

Nothing in Goebbels's diaries changes this situation. As Irving (1996: 388)⁷ observes, "Nowhere do the diary's 75,000 pages refer to an explicit order by Hitler for the murder of the Jews." On the contrary: we find repeated and consistent reference only to expulsion and deportation.

Second, and more importantly, once the alleged extermination process was underway, we have no direct evidence that either Hitler or Goebbels knew anything about it—which is inconceivable. Below I consider the account given by Kershaw (2000). He undertakes an amazing series of gyrations to argue that Hitler both planned the genocide of the Jews and knew about its progress, despite the lack of any evidence. His points overlap with the diary entries, which I will cover below. Suffice to say here that, on Kershaw's reading, Hitler was incredibly aloof on the Jewish Question. "Even in his inner circle Hitler could never bring himself to speak with outright frankness about the killing of the Jews" (p. 487)—in other words, he never, ever spoke openly about this most-vital aspect of the entire Nazi program. Hitler's comments were always "confined to generalities," sprinkled in with the "occasional menacing allusion." Thus, with a mere wink and a nod, the mass murder of 6 million Jews was effected.

Given the striking lack of evidence, and the inconceivability that mass murder of millions was underway without awareness at the top, only two alternatives are possible: (1) the Nazi hierarchy knew all about the mass murder but mutually agreed to never discuss it, or to refer to it only in euphemisms and code language—even in the most private of settings; or (2) no systematic mass murder occurred at all, and the reality was in fact just as they said: expulsion and deportation, along with a certain degree of incidental death. I would suggest that a detailed look at Goebbels's diary entries, in conjunction with the alleged 'extermination' actions that were occurring at the same time, may shine some light on this dispute.

* * * * *

To the best of my knowledge only two English books cite the diary in any detail: Irving's *Goebbels* (1996) and Kershaw's *Hitler 1936-1945: Nemesis* (2000).⁸ Irving, especially in the longer Internet version, captures many important passages on the Jewish Question, but this is clearly not his main concern. Kershaw has a large number of quotations, but most are only partial, out of context, and designed to cast a certain light on Hitler. To his credit, and unlike many other works, Kershaw does a good job of including the original German words for the key terms, especially those relating to expulsion, evacuation, 'elimination,' and the like.

There are at least three concerns for any foreign-language translation, and these loom particularly large here. First, inclusion of the original language on key words and phrases is essential; it allows the reader to be fully informed about the actual original text. Second, passages should be cited as fully as possible, in order to retain context. Third is the translation itself,

which is always problematic. Again, particularly so in this case, as many traditionalist writers are anxious to portray Goebbels's language—which ranges from benign to ambiguous—in as ominous a light as possible. On these three counts, Irving does a reasonably good job, lacking only the extended quotations that are preferable. Kershaw does well on the first point, but fails on the other two—as I will show. Of the published (partial) translations, Lochner comes in for notable censure.

In what follows I cite Goebbels's reflections on the Jews and Jewish policy in full. This is quite easy because, in virtually every case, the entry consists only of a few sentences or a short paragraph or two. I also include the German original for every contentious word or phrase. To maintain context, all entries are in chronological order. Following the date for each entry is original citation information from the *Tagebücher*: Part # (*Teil*), Volume # (*Band*), and page number. Hence, (II.3.478) refers to Part 2, volume 3, page 478.

In total, I include below the entries for 123 different days, ranging from May 1937 to April 1945. Of these, 43 appear in one of the published translation books; the remaining 80 entries are previously unpublished, and appear here for the first time in English. (Of course many scattered portions of these entries do appear elsewhere, primarily in the Irving and Kershaw books. But none in full.) Where the entries are those found in existing translations, I have identified them with asterisks (*=Taylor, **=Lochner, ***=Barry). Furthermore, I have maintained their wording, except when essential corrections were necessary—cited in the subsequent commentary.

To be as thorough as possible, it was my original aim to include every significant entry on the Jews or the Jewish Question. But in a 29-volume set these proved too numerous for the present essay. Hence, I will focus on the key time period, bounded by two significant events: *Kristallnacht*, and the deportation of the Hungarian Jews. Thus, for the period from 1 September 1938 through 30 June 1944, I have included literally every noteworthy entry by Goebbels.⁹ This exhaustive survey, covering nearly six years, gives the most complete picture possible of his perspective on the Jewish holocaust.

Before addressing the central period, I want to mention a few early passages. The first passing reference to the "Jewish Question" (*Judenfrage*) appears very early in the diary: 15 March 1924 (Part 1, vol. 1)—coincident with the first reference to Hitler. It was clearly a concern from his earliest days in the Party. But serious action against the Jews did not begin until more than a decade later, in the late 1930s. For example:

May 5, 1937 (I.4.124)

"The elimination of Jewish influence (Entjudung—lit. 'de-Jewing') in the Reich Chamber of Culture moves forward. I will not be at peace until it is completely free of Jews."

Nov 30, 1937 (I.4.429)

"Long discussion on the Jewish Question. My new law is almost finished. But that is not the goal. The Jews must leave Germany, and get completely out (aus [...] heraus) of Europe. It will still take some time, but it needs to happen. The Führer is determined to do so."

Here we have, I believe, the first reference to the complete removal of the Jews—a full year prior to *Kristallnacht*. Then into 1938 we find the first mention of the 'Madagascar plan':

Apr 11, 1938 (I.5.256)

"Long discussion at breakfast, on the Jewish Question. The Führer wants the Jews completely squeezed out (herausdrängen) of Germany. To Madagascar, or some such place. Right!"

Apr 23, 1938 (I.5.269-270)

"Speaking with Helldorf on the Jewish Question. [...] We will take from Berlin the character of a Jewish paradise. Jewish shops will be identified. In any case we will now proceed more radically. Negotiations with Poland and Romania. Madagascar would be the most suitable for [the Jews]."

At least into early 1942 (see entry for March 7), it was seriously proposed to round up all the European Jews and ship them to Madagascar, which was to be forcibly acquired from France. This fact, of course, is of central importance to the holocaust: if the Nazis wanted to ship them out, then obviously there was no plan for mass murder. To further complicate the traditional account, we need only observe that Chelmno, Auschwitz, and Belzec were all allegedly underway in March 1942. And in fact, it is worse than this, because talk of deportation continues right up until the end of the war.

I would further note Goebbels's use of the word 'radical,' which evidently means the mass expulsion of several million Jews, with little regard for their long-term well being. Also, the focus on Berlin: as local *Gauleiter*, Goebbels placed top priority on cleansing the city of its Jews. We see this over and over in the entries to follow. In fact this often seems to take

priority over a total cleansing of the Reich—which again does not fit well with the exterminationist thesis.

I now begin with the entries from 1 September 1938. The first notable item is an early observation on America:

Sep 17, 1938 (I.6.95)

“Afternoon meeting with our diplomat in Washington, Dieckhoff. He expresses a similar situation as Gienandt. At the moment it is hopeless. Everything depends on our position with England. Roosevelt is our enemy. He is surrounded by Jews. In a European conflict, if England stands against us, then so too will America.”

In the run-up to *Kristallnacht*, we find evidence of Goebbels’s involvement with anti-Jewish actions the month before:

Oct 12, 1938 (I.6.142)

“Helldorf gives me a report on the status of the Jewish action in Berlin. It proceeds systematically. And the Jews now gradually withdraw. Then we have the event itself, triggered in part by the murder of Ernst vom Rath, German diplomat in Paris. He was shot by a Jewish teenager, Herschel Grynszpan.”

Nov 10, 1938 (I.6.180-181)

“In Kassel and Dessau there were large demonstrations against the Jews, synagogues burned and shops demolished. In the afternoon the death of our [Paris] diplomat vom Rath was announced. I go to the Party reception in the old town hall. A huge operation. I present the Führer. He states: let the demonstrations continue. Police are to withdraw. The Jews should feel the public wrath. That is only right. I give appropriate instructions to the police and Party. Then I have a short discussion with Party leadership. Everyone rushes to the phones. Now the people will act.

We must not let this cowardly murder [of vom Rath] go unanswered. Let things follow their course. The Hitler Patrol cleans house in Munich. A synagogue is smashed to pieces. I try to save it from the fire; but I fail.

The Patrol has done some vicious work. A message runs out across the Reich: 50-75 synagogues burned. The Führer has ordered the immediate arrest of 25,000-30,000 Jews. That will have an effect. They will now see that our patience has run out.

When I go into the hotel, all the windowpanes rattle. Bravo! Bravo! In all large cities the synagogues burn. German property is not threatened.

The first reports come early in the morning. It has been a raging fury. Just as expected. The whole nation is in turmoil. This murder will be very expensive for the Jews. The dear Jews will think carefully in the future before shooting German diplomats."

To this day it is unclear to what extent the riots were spontaneous outbreaks of anti-Semitism, or well-planned instigations by plain-clothed security men.

Nov 13, 1938 (I.6.185)

"Heydrich reports on the actions: 190 synagogues burned and destroyed. Conference with Göring on the Jewish Question. Hot battles over the solution. I argue for a radical solution. Funk is somewhat soft and yielding. The result: a fine of one billion Marks is imposed on the Jews. In the shortest period of time, they will be completely excluded (ausgeschlossen) from economic life. They can no longer run businesses. [...] A whole series of other measures is planned. In any case, a clean sheet has now been made. I work well with Göring. He also attacks this sharply. The radical view has prevailed. I draft a very sharp public communiqué."

Again, more talk of the 'radical' solution as total exclusion from public life. Then two follow-up entries:

Nov 22, 1938 (I.6.195)

"We are planning a series of new measures against the Jews. I have a long phone call with Göring, who is coordinating all the actions. He approaches it harshly. In Berlin we do more than anywhere else in the Reich. That's also necessary, because we have so many Jews. But the actions have also destroyed much. Good that it's over."

Nov 26, 1938 (I.6.202)

"Situation report: almost exclusively on the Jewish Question. Partly positive, partly negative. We must enlighten the public, and especially the intellectuals, on the Jewish Question."

In late November, two more interesting observations on America:

Nov 27, 1938 (I.6.203)

“Roosevelt speaks out ever harsher against us. He is totally in the hands of the Jews. A Jew-slave, perhaps even of Jewish ancestry.”

Dec 17, 1938 (I.6.223)

“America is strongly against us. On the Jewish Question it makes impertinent remarks. It is surely also a Jew-state!”

The year 1939 opened with this entry, as a follow-up to the 5 May 1937 comment:

Jan 26, 1939 (I.6.239) *

“The elimination of Jewish influence (Entjudung) in the Reich Chamber of Culture continues. But now considerable financial difficulties are apparent. We shall overcome them.”

Four days later, on January 30, Hitler gave his famous Reichstag speech of 1939. This was remarkable on several counts. It was sprinkled with many references to international Jewry (*internationale Judentum*), the Jewish world-enemy (*jüdischen Weltfeind*), and the Jewish Question generally. It was a grand event, the equivalent of a presidential joint session of Congress. The cameras and microphones were running. Among some initial remarks on the Jewish Question, he states that the “foreign peoples” must be “pushed out” (*abzuschieben*) in order to allow the Germans to arise. The key section occurs in the middle of the speech: “Europe cannot find peace until the Jewish Question is resolved.” Jewry too often lives off the work of others; unless they begin to perform true, productive work, they will sooner or later “succumb to a crisis of unimaginable proportions.” He continues:

“Many times in my life I have been a prophet, and was often laughed at. At the time of my struggle for power, it was primarily the Jewish people who accepted my prophecies with laughter. [...] I believe that this time the laughter of the Jews in Germany is stuck in their throats. Today I will again be a prophet: If the international Jewish financiers in and outside Germany should succeed in plunging the nations once again into a world war, then the result will be not the Bolshevization of the Earth and with it the victory of Jewry, but rather the destruction (Vernichtung) of the Jewish race in Europe.”

Here, for all the world to see, Hitler is predicting the ‘destruction,’ or perhaps ‘annihilation,’ of the Jews. At issue is the meaning of this word *Ver-*

nichtung. Its root, *nicht*, means ‘none’ or ‘nothing’. Bilingual dictionaries translate it as either ‘destruction’ or ‘extermination.’

So what can the “*Vernichtung* of the Jewish race” mean? On the standard view, of course, this means mass murder: literal genocide, the killing of every Jew. But there are two problems here. First, *Vernichtung*, along with the English equivalents ‘destruction’ and ‘extermination’, are inherently ambiguous. To ‘destroy’ is literally to ‘de-structure’ or ‘deconstruct’ (Latin: *de-struere*). To destroy an individual person or animal is to kill it, but to destroy a collective—a city, a nation, a race—is to ruin its structural coherence, and cause it to cease to exist as a collective entity.¹⁰ This of course would happen if every individual member were killed, but it in no way demands this. Likewise with ‘extermination’, which means, literally, to ‘push beyond the boundaries’ (Latin: *ex-terminus*). To exterminate is simply to ‘get rid of completely’, by whatever means. And in fact the leading traditionalists evidently agree with these benign interpretations. Kershaw, for example, goes to great pains to argue that there was neither plan nor intention of mass murder prior to September 1941. Browning (2004: 371) comes to a similar conclusion.

The second problem is this: How likely is it that Hitler would declare to the world his intention to murder an entire race? Kershaw (2000: 522) pointedly emphasizes Hitler’s “intense preoccupation with secrecy”; the mass murder scheme was “a secret to be carried to the grave.” But wait—he already announced it to the world in January 1939! Does it even make sense to then keep such a thing secret? Or perhaps there was no secret to keep.

For some unknown reason, Goebbels does not comment on the Reichstag speech—at least, in the days and months that followed. (Down the road he would see it as something of a milestone.) In fact for the next 10 months, one finds no substantial reference to the Jewish Question at all. Perhaps pressing matters of war intervened. Czechoslovakia disintegrated in March and Germany was thereby compelled to occupy the territory. With much inducement from England, Poland undertook a series of belligerent actions, resulting in the German-Polish war that began on September 1. Two days later this regional war became a European one, when France and the UK declared war on Germany. Comments by Goebbels resumed in October:

Oct 7, 1939 (I.7.141)

"The Jewish problem will probably be the hardest to solve. These Jews are no longer human beings. [They are] predators equipped with a cold intellect, which must be counteracted."

Oct 17, 1939 (I.7.157)

"This Jewry must be destroyed (vernichtet)."

...taking a cue, perhaps, from Hitler. The remainder of the year includes comments again consistent with removal, and no evidence of contemplated murder. The mention of typhus (December 6) is significant; as we know, this was undoubtedly the cause of death for many in the ghettos and camps, both Jews and non-Jews."

Nov 3, 1939 (I.7.179-180)

"With the Führer. I give him a report on my trip to Poland, which interests him greatly. Above all, my exposition on the Jewish problem earns his full support. Judaism is a waste product. More clinical than social issue."

Dec 5, 1939 (I.7.220-221)

"[The Führer] shares my view on the Jewish and Polish questions. The Jewish danger must be banished (gebannt) by us. But it will still return in a few generations. There is no real panacea."

Dec 6, 1939 (I.7.222)

"Du Prel reports on the situation in the General Government. Horrible! There is still much to do. Nothing has changed in Warsaw. A typhus epidemic and famine have broken out. In Lublin, they're waiting for the expelled (abgeschoben) Jews."

Dec 19, 1939 (I.7.236-237) *

"The Jews are attempting to infiltrate cultural life again. Particularly half-Jews. When they are serving with the armed forces, they have some reason on their side. Nevertheless, I reject all requests in this area. My thoughts on the Jewish Question in wartime meet with the Führer's approval. He intends to clear (heraushaben) all half-Jews from the Wehrmacht. Otherwise there will be continual 'incidents.'

Through the entire first half of 1940 we find, again, no entries on the Jews. Germany was racking up military successes, culminating in the invasion of the Low Countries on May 10 and the push to the Channel. France was quickly overwhelmed, and German troops marched into Paris on June 14. Things were going very well; the war appeared to be heading toward a rapid conclusion; and then the Jewish Question could be addressed in earnest."

Jun 6, 1940 (I.8.159)

"We will quickly be finished with the Jews after the war."

Jul 6, 1940 (I.8.207)

"The American Jewish press is entirely on Churchill's side. Now, suddenly, France is no longer the ideal democratic nation. Riff-raff that must be eradicated (ausgerottet)."

Jul 20, 1940 (I.8.229)

"One must neutralize the habitual criminal before the crime, not after. Our lawyers will never understand that. The Jews also belong in this category, and one must make short shrift (kurzen Prozess) of them."

By July the question of Berlin had again arisen, as had the Madagascar plan:

Jul 26, 1940 (I.8.238)

"The big plan for the evacuation (Evakuierung) of the Jews from Berlin was approved. Additionally, all the Jews of Europe are supposed to be deported (deportiert) to Madagascar after the war."

Aug 17, 1940 (I.8.276) *

"Later on, we want to ship (verfrachten) the Jews to Madagascar. There they can build their own state."

Sep 2, 1940 (I.8.301)

"I fly to Kattowitz [Katowice, Poland, near Auschwitz...]. Bracht reports to me on the various concerns of the Province. The Poles are resigned to their fate, and the Jews have been pushed out (abgeschoben)."

Nov 2, 1940 (I.8.406)

“With the Führer. Epp has colonial questions. Koch and Forster, questions about the East. All want to unload their trash onto the General Government: Jews, the sick, the lazy, etc. And [Hans] Frank resists. Not entirely without reason. He would like to make Poland a model nation. But that goes too far. He cannot, and should not. According to the Führer, Poland is a large labor pool for us—a place to hold failed people and use them for lowly work. We have to get them from somewhere. Frank does not like this, but he has to. And the Jews will later be moved out (abschieben) of this area.”

We see here a growing vocabulary of terms relating to the status of the Jews. The large majority refer to removing, deporting, or expelling: *ausheraus*, *herausdrängen*, *ausscheiden*, *abschieben*, *evakuieren*, *verfrachten*, *deportieren*. Later we find other related terms: *beseitigen*, *herausbringen*, *aufräumen*, *herausschaffen*, and others—some 18 in total, by my count (not including conjugates). This group is the most numerous, and the most benign. Two of these, *evakuieren* (evacuate) and *abschieben* (expel or push out), are especially popular with Goebbels.

A second group of terms include those that I will call ‘ambiguous’, in the sense that they have somewhat more ominous implications: *vernichten* (verb form of *Vernichtung*), *ausrotten*, *liquidieren*, *eliminieren*, and *auslöschen*. I’ve discussed the first of these already, and in the July 6 entry Goebbels first uses a form of *ausrotten*. This word, literally meaning ‘to root out’, translates to the ambiguous ‘exterminate’ or to ‘eradicate’ (*exradix*, lit. ‘up-root’). Once again, none of these meanings entail death, killing, or murder. A plant that is *ausrottet* can be replanted and live; a family can be ‘up-rooted’ and reestablished elsewhere. The exterminationist suggestion that either *vernichten* or *ausrotten* necessarily imply murder is, quite literally, nonsense.¹¹

I should note, by the way, that the German language does indeed have words for ‘killing’: *morden*, *ermorden*, *töten*, *totschlagen*, *totschiessen*. Goebbels had no shortage of alternatives if he wished to discuss literally killing the Jews. This is, after all, a personal and private diary. Consider his situation: Should the Germans win, he has nothing to fear. Should they lose, he must have known that his own death awaited, along with the ‘destruction’ of greater Germany—again, nothing to fear. Why hold back? So the reader might be wondering: Does Goebbels ever use such explicit terms? In fact he does: once. If I may temporarily leap ahead to one of his final entries, 14 March 1945, we read that certain soon-to-be-victorious

Jews are calling for no mercy on the Germans—to which Goebbels replies, “Anyone in a position to do so should kill (*totschlagen*) these Jews like rats.” There we have it—an unambiguous call for murder. Except that it’s three years too late. One wonders, though, why, on the exterminationist thesis, Goebbels didn’t resort to such language much sooner. Perhaps it was only at the end, when the Jewish-backed Allies were slaughtering innocent Germans by the tens of thousands, that the Nazis began calling for their deaths. And perhaps by then it was justified.¹²

Into 1941 we start to move strongly toward—on the traditionalist view—systematic murder. But not until the second half of the year:

Mar 18, 1941 (I.9.193) *

“Vienna will soon be entirely Jew-free. And now it is Berlin’s turn. I am already discussing the question with the Führer and Dr. Frank. He puts the Jews to work, and they are indeed obedient. Later they will have to get out of Europe altogether (aus [...] heraus).”

Mar 19, 1941 (I.9.195)

“Early flight to Posen. [...] Here, all sorts have been liquidated (liquidiert), above all the Jewish trash. This has to be. I explain the situation to Greiser.”

Mar 22, 1941 (I.9.199)

“I am deeply troubled about the cultural impact of foreign laborers working in the Reich. There are several hundred thousand. The harsh line towards prisoners of war is also somewhat mitigated. The Jews themselves cannot be evacuated (evakuiert) from Berlin because 30,000 are working in the armaments industry. Who, earlier, would have thought this possible?”

In the March 19 entry, we find the first occurrence of another troublesome word, ‘liquidation’. It proves to be rather popular, appearing in eight different entries. The troublesome part is that, in many cases, it means something other than killing. Goebbels speaks of liquidating the “Jewish danger” (30 May 1942) and of liquidating Jewish marriages (6 December 1942). The word ‘liquidation’ means, primarily, ‘to make fluid.’ And this in fact is a fairly apt description of the deportation process: a large, entrenched Jewish community who had to be uprooted, made liquid, and then to flow out across the borders. Nothing in this entails killing. Nor at the time, in the 1940s, did the word necessarily mean murder. An article in the

London Times had this to say: “The rest of the Jews in the General Government [...] would be liquidated, which means either transported eastward in cattle trucks to an unknown destination, or killed where they stood” (4 December 1942; p. 3). Holocaust survivor Thomas Buergenthal (2009: 49) writes of his experience in the Kielce ghetto: “The ghetto was being liquidated or, in the words bellowing out of the loudspeakers, *Aussiedlung! Aussiedlung!* (‘Evacuation! Evacuation!’).” And later he comments, “After the liquidation of the labor camp [...]” (p. 56). Clearly the word means, and meant, something other than killing.

Obviously, ‘liquidate’ can mean killing, as can a huge variety of words under contrived circumstances. In Mafia circles, a ‘kiss’ can mean death. Motion pictures use a variety of silly terms: whack, pop, bump, waste, take for a ride, off, do in, and so on. In the case of Goebbels, we must ask once again, why would he go to lengths to use euphemisms or silly code words in a personal diary? And one in which, when motivated, he was happy to call a spade a spade?

June 1941 was an important month: the Germans invaded Russia, and the *Einsatzgruppen* were activated to protect the troops from partisan attacks. Here I refer back to Kershaw’s account of events. Through mid-1941, Kershaw admits, there was no true genocidal plan—despite Hitler’s infamous prophecy of January 1939. As of June 1941, “shooting or gassing to death all the Jews of Europe [...] was at this stage not in mind” (p. 463). Even through the end of the year, the alleged physical extermination plan “was still emerging” (p. 492). Hence the plan in mid-1941 was just as Goebbels had recorded: one of confinement, deportation, and ethnic cleansing.

Anti-partisan actions of the *Einsatzgruppen* began in June and July 1941; Jews were prominent among the partisans, and hence they were prominent among the victims. Then “there was a sharp escalation from around August onward,” both in the death toll and in the ranks of the shooters. Allegedly, the 3,000 *Einsatzgruppen* men recruited large numbers of “native collaborators” to help with the slaughter; Kershaw cites Brown-ing (1995: 106) as stating that the combined troop levels rose to more than 300,000 by January 1943!¹³

Jun 20, 1941 (I.9.390)

“Dr. Frank talks about the General Government. There one is already happily looking forward to expelling (abschieben) the Jews. Judaism in Poland gradually decays. A just punishment for inciting the people

and instigating the war. The Führer has also prophesied that to the Jews."

Jul 13, 1941 (II.1.58)

"We are again getting reports from the eastern front on the terrible atrocities being committed by the Bolsheviks. The Moscow Jews continue to apply their infamous procedure, in order to push the outrages committed by them into our shoes. But the whole world agrees that there is not a word of truth in it."

Kershaw then cites a mysterious meeting between Hitler and Himmler in mid-July, during which the former "effectively [...] placed the 'Jewish Question' [...] directly in Himmler's hands" (p. 469). After this, we are to believe that Hitler was content to speak only of deportations, removals, and evacuations, all of which allegedly reconfirmed the implicit genocide command. When Hitler is quoted as saying, "Where the Jews are sent to, whether to Siberia or Madagascar, is immaterial," Kershaw offers an amazing response: "The frame of mind [here] was overtly genocidal. The reference to Madagascar was meaningless." Evacuation to Siberia was "genocide of a kind" (p. 471). But never mind this; as of July 1941, "no decision for the 'Final Solution'—meaning the physical extermination of the Jews throughout Europe—had yet been taken. But genocide was in the air."

Aug 7, 1941 (II.1.189)

"In the Warsaw Ghetto, there was some increase in typhus; although provisions have been made to ensure that it will not leave the ghetto. The Jews have always been carriers of infectious diseases. They must either be cooped up in a ghetto and left to themselves, or liquidated (liquidieren); otherwise they will always infect the healthy population of the civilized nations."

Aug 11, 1941 (II.1.213)

"In the [occupied] Baltic countries, the tendency is to form their own governments, and to shake off the Germans as quickly as possible, in order to become stronger. In the large cities a punishment is inflicted upon the Jews. They are beaten to death en masse in the streets by the self-defense organizations of the Baltic peoples. That which the Führer prophesied comes true: that if the Jews succeeded in provoking a war again, they would thereby cease to exist (seine Existenz verlieren würde)."

A very important observation: the deaths of Jews in the Baltics were caused in large part by revenge-seeking natives, not roving German death squads. And in fact there was a good basis for this revenge, namely the murder and torture inflicted by the Jews of Stalin's GPU intelligence unit.¹⁴

In his *Table Talk* discussions of this time, Hitler argued that Germany was justified in deporting the Jews, and that furthermore they were doing it relatively humanely:

"If any people has the right to proceed to evacuations, it is we, for we've often had to evacuate our own population. Eight hundred thousand men had to emigrate from East Prussia alone. How humanely sensitive we are is shown by the fact that we consider it a maximum of brutality to have liberated our country from 600,000 Jews. And yet we accepted, without recrimination, and as something inevitable, the evacuation of our own compatriots!" (1953/2000: 24)

There seems to be no independent verification of the 600,000 figure, so we cannot identify from where they would have been deported, unfortunately. Meanwhile Goebbels continued his actions in Berlin:

Aug 12, 1941 (II.1.218)

"The Jewish Question has again become especially acute in the capital. We count 70,000 Jews in Berlin at the moment, of which 30,000 are not even working; the others live as parasites off the work of the host nation. This is an intolerable situation. The various departments of the upper-level Reich authorities still oppose a radical solution to this problem. But I won't let it go, for I don't want to experience the Jewish question solved again as it was in 1938—by the mob. But this is prevented in the long run only if we take timely and sweeping measures. [...] I also think it necessary that the Jews be given a badge. They are active in public life as defeatists and mood-spoilers. It is therefore imperative that they be recognized as Jews. They must not be allowed to speak on behalf of the German people. They have nothing to do with the German people, but rather must be excluded from (ausgeschieden) the German people."

Goebbels clearly does not want a repeat of *Kristallnacht*. Also, this is the first mention of the "badge," or yellow Star of David, that the Jews were ultimately forced to wear.

Aug 18, 1941 (II.1.254)

"It's different with the Jewish Question. All Germans are presently against the Jews. The Jews must be put back in the box. When one realizes that there are still 75,000 Jews in Berlin, of which only 23,000 are working, it seems a grotesque fact. One cannot even inform the German people, or else there would surely be pogroms. We Germans thus have the honor to conduct the war, and meanwhile the parasitical Jews, who are waiting for our defeat in order to exploit it for themselves, are sustained by our national strength. This condition is absolutely outrageous. I will ensure that it will soon be stopped."

Aug 19, 1941 (II.1.265-266)

"Regarding the Jewish Question, I completely prevail with the Führer. He agrees that we will introduce a large, visible Jew-badge for all the Jews in the Reich, and which must be worn in public; then we can remove (beseitigt) the danger that the Jews will act as defeatists and complainers without being recognized. Also, if in the future they do not work, they will be given smaller rations than the German people. That is only right and proper. He who does not work, should not eat. It's all we need in Berlin, for example, that of 76,000 Jews only 26,000 work, and the rest not only don't work, but they live on the rations of the Berlin population! Additionally, the Führer tells me that, as soon as the first transport opportunity becomes available, the Berlin Jews should be pushed off (abzuschieben) to the East. There they will have to make do under a harsh climate.

We discuss the Jewish problem. The Führer is convinced that his prophecy in the Reichstag—that if Jewry succeeded in provoking yet another world war, it would end with their destruction (Vernichtung)—is confirmed. It is coming true in the following weeks and months with an almost uncanny certainty. In the East, the Jews must pay the price; in Germany they have paid in part already, and they will pay more in the future. Their last resort is North America, and there they will also have to pay before long.

Jewry is a foreign element among civilized nations, and its activities in the past three decades has been so devastating that the people's reaction is understandable—indeed, one might say, a compulsion of nature. In any case, in the world to come the Jews will not have anything to laugh about. In Europe today there is a united front against Jewry. This is already apparent in the entire European press—and not only on this

question, but also on many other matters there exists a thoroughly unified opinion."

So here we have a clear and unambiguous statement: that the *Vernichtung* of the Jewish race meant the complete exclusion from society and, ultimately, its physical removal.

Aug 20, 1941 (II.1.278)

"On the Jewish Question, I am now beginning to take action. Because the Führer has allowed me to introduce a badge for the Jews, I believe I will be able to accomplish this marking very quickly, without carrying out the legal reforms that would normally be required in such a situation. [...] Public life in Berlin must quickly be cleaned (gereinigt) [of Jews]. If at the moment it is not possible to make Berlin a Jew-free city, at least they should not appear in public any longer. Additionally, the Führer told me that I may expel (abschieben) the Jews from Berlin immediately after the end of our campaign in the East. Berlin must become a Jew-free city. It is outrageous and scandalous that 76,000 Jews, most of whom are parasites, can roam the capital of the German Reich. They destroy not only the streetscape, but also the mood.

Although it will be very different when they wear a badge, we can leave it at that until they are removed. We have to approach this problem without any sentimentality. One need only imagine what the Jews would do to us, if they had the power to do so—as we have the power to do. In any case, I remain alert regarding further action on the Jewish Question. If one must also overcome bureaucratic and partly sentimental resistance in the higher Reich offices, I will be neither surprised nor deterred. I took up the fight against Jewry in Berlin in 1926, and it is my ambition not to rest until the last Jew has left Berlin."

Throughout the summer Hitler resisted mass evacuations. Then, according to Kershaw: "Suddenly, in mid-September, Hitler changed his mind. There was no overt indication of the reason" (p. 477). Here's one overt indication: on September 12 Roosevelt ordered the U.S. navy to begin sinking German ships. This was only the latest in a string of aggressive and provocative actions by the Americans, which began with their shadowing of German freighter and supply ships in late 1939, and included the Lend-Lease Act of March 1941 that authorized military assistance for the Allied nations, explicitly ending U.S. neutrality.

A Himmler letter from this time cites Hitler's authorization to begin with an initial shipment of 60,000 Jews to the Lodz ghetto. This action was

key to the “gathering whirlwind of extermination,” says Kershaw. But even this was no Final Solution order. “It is doubtful whether a single, comprehensive decision of such a kind was ever made.” Instead, “numerous local and regional Nazi leaders [...] seized on the opportunity [...] to start killing Jews in their own areas” (p. 481). The killing was as yet haphazard; a “coordinated, comprehensive programme of total genocide [...] would still take some months to emerge.”

Sep 24, 1941 (II.1.480-481, 485)

“Also with respect to the Jewish Question, I have some important things to say to Heydrich. For the Berlin Jews, we will drive away the desire to hide their badges; and anyway, I am of the opinion that the Jews must be evacuated (evakuieren) from Berlin as quickly as possible. This will be the case as soon as we have settled the military issues in the East. In the end, they will all be transported (transportieren) to the camps designed by the Bolsheviks. These camps were built by the Jews; it is only right that they are now populated by the Jews.

The Führer is of the opinion that the Jews must, after all, be removed from (herausgebracht) all of Germany. The first cities to be made Jew-free are Berlin, Vienna, and Prague. Berlin is the first in line, and I am hopeful that in the course of this year we are able to transport out (abzutransportieren) a substantial part of Berlin’s Jews to the East.”

The first trains left Berlin on 18 October 1941.

Oct 21, 1941 (II.2.169)

“We are also now gradually beginning with the expulsion (Ausweisung) of Jews from Berlin to the East. Several thousand have already been put in motion. At first they go to Lodz [Poland]. Thereupon commences a big excitement. The Jews send anonymous letters to the foreign press seeking help, and in fact some messages seep through to foreign countries. I forbid further information about that for the foreign correspondents. Nevertheless, it will not prevent this from expanding further in the coming days. Nothing will change. While it is, at the moment, unpleasant to see this issue discussed in front of the world stage, one must accept this disadvantage. The main thing is that the capital will become Jew-free. And I will not rest until this goal is fully achieved.”

Four days later. Hitler made this well-known comment:

“From the rostrum of the Reichstag, I prophesied to Jewry that, in the event of war’s proving inevitable, the Jew would disappear from Europe. That race of criminals has on its conscience 2 million dead of the First World War, and now already hundreds of thousands more. Let nobody tell me that, all the same, we can’t park them in the marshy parts of Russia! Who’s worrying about our troops? It’s not a bad idea, by the way, that public rumor attributes to us a plan to exterminate the Jews. Terror is a salutary thing.” (1953/2000: 87)

So, we see here (1) continued endorsement for literal deportation, (2) no talk of killing, murder, gas chambers, etc, (3) an equation between ‘extermination’ and deportation, and (4) a minimal concern for secrecy. The fact that Hitler finds some use in the rumor mill is interesting, a kind of unanticipated fringe benefit. But he perhaps did not anticipate how talk of extermination would play in the Anglo world. Two months before he made the above comment, the *New York Times* (August 25; p. 3) reported that, “unless the Nazis were defeated, wholesale extermination would be the lot of all Jews” (“including those in the United States and Britain”!)—and here, ‘extermination’ means murder, no doubt.

Then an important Goebbels entry that continues the account from August 11:

Nov 2, 1941 (II.2.221-222)

“We fly early in the morning to Vilnius [Lithuania ...]. We were met by Lt Colonel Zehnpfennig, who drove us through the city. Vilnius has a quarter million inhabitants, and nearly one quarter are Jewish. However, the ranks of the Jews have been greatly thinned by the Lithuanians after the invasion of German troops. The Jews were active primarily as [Soviet] GPU spies and informers, and countless Lithuanian intellectuals and citizens owe their deaths to them. The revenge tribunal established by the Lithuanians and Poles, being the majority of the city, has been horrifying. Thousands [of Jews] have been shot, and even now hundreds more as well. They have now all been rounded up into their ghettos. That they have not all been killed is due only to the fact that the Jews control the entire Vilnian handcraft industry, and the Lithuanians are completely dependent on them.

The city shows hardly any traces of war. But on a short drive through the ghetto, the view is horrifying. Here the Jews squat in rows, hideous forms, not to be looked at let alone touched. The Jews have created their own administration, which also has a police function. They stand

at the entrance to the ghetto, which is separated from the rest of the city, on guard and at attention. Even 10 years ago I would not have dreamed that something like this would again be the case. Terrible figures lurk in the streets, which I would not like to meet at night. The Jews are the lice of civilized man. They must somehow be eradicated (ausrotten), otherwise they will again play their tormenting and troublesome role. Only if one advances with the necessary brutality can one be finished with them. When they are spared, one will later be their victim."

Nov 17, 1941 (II.2.304)

"In a published telegram, Churchill openly stands on the side of the Jews. He is a consummate servant of the Jews."

Nov 18, 1941 (II.2.309)

"Heydrich told me about his intentions regarding the expulsion (Abschiebung) of Jews from the Reich. The question is more difficult than we had first suspected. In any case, 15,000 Jews will have to stay in Berlin because they are employed in the war effort and other dangerous work. Also, a number of elderly Jews cannot be pushed off (abgeschoben) to the East. For them, a Jewish ghetto in a small town in the protectorate will be arranged. The third phase, which will begin early next year, will follow the procedure I have proposed to clear the area city by city, such that when the evacuation (Evakuierung) in a city begins, it will also be finished as soon as possible, and the effect on public opinion will be neither too long nor too harmful. Heydrich's approach on this question is very consistent. He is something I had not previously realized: a shrewd political thinker."

So no evacuation either for workers or the elderly. One wonders if genocide was still 'in the air'.

Nov 22, 1941 (II.2.340-341)

"Also, regarding the Jewish Question, the Führer fully agrees with my views. He wants an energetic policy against the Jews, but we do not want to cause any unnecessary difficulties. Evacuation (Evakuierung) of the Jews will be undertaken city by city. It is still uncertain when it will be Berlin's turn; but when its turn comes, the evacuation will be carried out as quickly as possible to the very end."

On the first of December, Hitler offered some philosophical thoughts on the social effect of Jewry:

"[The] destructive role of the Jew has in a way a providential explanation. If nature wanted the Jew to be the ferment that causes people to decay, thus providing these peoples with an opportunity for a healthy reaction, in that case, people like St. Paul and Trotsky are, from our point of view, the most valuable. By the fact of their presence, they provoke the defensive reaction of the attacked organism. Dietrich Eckart once told me that in all his life he had known just one good Jew: Otto Weininger, who killed himself on the day when he realized that the Jew lives on the decay of peoples." (1953/2000: 141)

It is in this month, as we know, that the European war becomes a truly world war, as Germany—after some two years of provocation—declares war on the U.S. in the wake of Pearl Harbor. Also this month, on the orthodox view, a milestone occurs: Chelmno begins its extermination process, with gas vans powered by diesel engines. Evidently, then, genocide was more than in the air; it was on the ground running. And Goebbels, in truth, does seem to ramp up his rhetoric; he makes his first overt references to the deaths of Jews:

Dec 13, 1941 (II.2.498-499)

"As concerns the Jewish Question, the Führer is determined to make a clean sweep (reinen Tisch—lit. 'clean table'). He had prophesied to the Jews that if they once again brought about a World War they would experience their own destruction (Vernichtung). This was not just an empty phrase. The World War is here, and the destruction of Jewry must be the necessary consequence. This question must be seen without sentimentality. We are not here in order to have sympathy with the Jews, rather we sympathize with our own German people. If the German people have now once again sacrificed as many as 160,000 dead in the Eastern campaign, then the authors of this bloody conflict must pay with their lives (mit ihrem Leben bezahlen müssen)."

Dec 14, 1941 (II.2.503)

"The early curfew in Paris has been abolished, but a plethora of Jews remain to be pushed out (abgeschoben) of occupied France to the eastern region. In many cases this is equivalent to a death sentence. The remaining Jews will think hard before stirring up trouble or sabotage against the German troops. Meanwhile General von Stülpnagel can

conduct the execution of 100 Jews and communists. That will provide a very plausible and psychologically-adept explanation for the Parisian population, and will not fail to have an effect."

If deportation is sometimes the "equivalent of a death sentence," and many will "pay with their lives," we are left wondering how, exactly, and in what numbers, they will die. I trust that there is a clear difference between (a) *many* dying from disease, exposure, lack of medical care, periodic shootings, etc, and (b) *all* dying in a complex and systematic gassing operation. There is no doubt that concentrating and deporting thousands or millions of people in wartime would lead to many deaths. But this is not genocide. The next entry is telling:

Dec 18, 1941 (II.2.533-534)

"I speak with the Führer regarding the Jewish Question. He is determined to take consistent action and not be deterred by bourgeois sentimentality. Above all, the Jews must leave the Reich (aus [...] heraus). We discuss the possibilities for especially clearing out (räumen) Berlin as quickly as possible. Objections are sure to be raised here—from the Four-Year Plan, from the Economics Ministry—because about 13,000 Jews are employed in the armaments industry in Berlin; but, with some good will, they can be replaced by Bolshevik prisoners of war. In any case we will tackle this problem as soon as possible, especially when we have the transport capacity to move this body of people. Berlin cannot count as absolutely consolidated as long as Jews are living and working in the capital. Besides, the bourgeois Schlappmeier has ever-new excuses to save the Jews. Earlier it was Jewish money and influence; now it is the Jewish workers. German intellectuals and elite have no anti-Jewish instinct at all. Their vigilance is not sharp. It is therefore necessary that we solve this problem, since it is likely that, if it remains unsolved, it will lead to the most devastating consequences after we are gone. The Jews should all be pushed off (abgeschoben) to the East. We are not very interested in what becomes of them after that. They have wished this fate upon themselves, they have started the war, and they must now pay the price."

"We are not very interested in what becomes of them after that." Harsh and brutal, perhaps, but clearly far less than genocide. The same thought was echoed by Hans Frank, in a memo of December 16:¹⁵

"What is to happen to the Jews [after evacuation]? [...] We have in the General Government an estimated 2.5 million Jews—perhaps with

those closely related to Jews and what goes with it, now 3.5 million Jews. We can't shoot these 3.5 million Jews, we can't poison them [...]"

Obviously, he and Goebbels, at least, were unaware of any program of genocide.

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Notes

- ¹ The first 6 or 7 years of entries were every 2nd or 3rd day. But by 1930 he was rigorously recording his thoughts daily. Until mid-1941 he wrote them himself; afterwards he dictated the entries, and they became considerably longer.
- ² Alfred Rosenberg was also well-educated, having earned a PhD in engineering in 1917. But in spite of his role as chief ideologist for the NSDAP, he was not nearly as influential in the Nazi hierarchy as Goebbels was. For most of the war years Rosenberg served as *Reichsminister* for the occupied Eastern territories.
- ³ L. Lochner, in *Goebbels* (1948: 25).
- ⁴ *Ibid.*, p. viii.
- ⁵ I discount the Eichmann recollection of Heydrich: "The *Führer* has ordered the physical extermination of the Jews." Virtually no one on either side of the Holocaust debate accepts Eichmann's trial testimony as truth.

- ⁶ “What began in 1941 was a process of destruction not planned in advance, not organized centrally by any agency. There was no blueprint and there was no budget for destructive measures. [These measures] were taken step by step, one step at a time. Thus came about not so much a plan being carried out, but an incredible meeting of minds, a consensus—mind reading by a far-flung bureaucracy.” *New York Newsday*, Feb 23, 1983; Part II, p. 3.
- ⁷ Corresponds to page 694 of the (much-longer) Internet version of the book.
- ⁸ One book notably lacking in much citation of the diary is Browning’s *The Origins of the Final Solution* (2004). This massive work, published four years after Kershaw’s comparable book, should have made equally good use of the diaries. But one struggles in vain to find more than a half-dozen quotations. This is revealing: Browning, publishing in the U.S., clearly did not want to draw attention to those many troublesome entries referring to deportations, evacuations, and the like. Kershaw was at least honest enough to cite them, even as he was papering them over.
- ⁹ Obviously this is a judgment call. There are many minor or inconsequential references to Jews, Jewish media or propaganda, Bolshevik Jews, Jewish films, etc. By a rough count, one finds 25-30 entries per volume that mention Jews (about one reference every third day, on average). Thus, of the 16 volumes that I cover exhaustively, there are some 450 potentially-relevant entries.
- ¹⁰ Other definitions include “to ruin structure or condition,” “to neutralize,” “to defeat.”
- ¹¹ The diary entry of 6 February 1945 shows this very clearly. Goebbels is discussing the common goal of Germany’s enemies, namely, “to destroy (*vernichten*) Germany and to eradicate (*auszurotten*) the German people.” In neither case is he even faintly contemplating the literal mass murder of the entire German population.
- ¹² There are other threatening passages, including those referring to ‘liquidation’ and to the Jews ‘paying with their lives.’ I address these in due course.
- ¹³ “Units of native collaborators had already played a significant role in the killing process. At the end of 1941, the strength of these units had reached 33,000. By June 1942, it was 165,000; by January 1943, 300,000. As Nebe rightly indicated, the task of killing Russian Jewry with the 3,000 men of the *Einsatzgruppen* was ‘impossible’.”
- ¹⁴ A related event occurred in the Ukraine in the 1930s; this was known as the Holodomor, and was a state-created famine that killed some 5 million people.
- ¹⁵ As cited in Kershaw (2000: 491).

Chil Rajchman's Treblinka Memoirs

Thomas Kues

1. Chil Rajchman and His Memoirs

Chil Rajchman, alias Yehiel Reichmann, alias Henryk Ruminowsky (his *nom de guerre* in the Warsaw underground resistance), was born in the Polish city of Łódź in June 1914. At the outbreak of World War II, he moved with his sister to a small town called Pruszków not far from Warsaw, from which they were later brought to the Warsaw Ghetto. Rajchman managed to obtain a work permit and left for the town of Ostrów Lubelski. When the Jewish communities in the area were liquidated in October 1942 he was marched off to Lubartów and from there sent to the “pure extermination camp” Treblinka II by train on October 10. On August 2, 1943, Rajchman and a number of other prisoners managed to escape from the camp following an uprising. After hiding in the Polish countryside for a period of time and obtaining “Aryan” identification papers, he eventually returned to Warsaw, where he joined the underground resistance in the ghetto and also the Polish Socialist Party.¹ Allegedly, Rajchman spent his free time in Warsaw during 1944 writing down in Yiddish his recollections from Treblinka, as a testimony for posterity.

On January 31, 1945, Rajchman returned to Łódź. He stayed in Poland until the end of 1946 when, despite having been given a “high position in the new Polish administration”² he moved to France. After living there for about a year and a half, he migrated with his wife to Uruguay, where he enjoyed significant prosperity as the owner of a textile company.³

In early 1980, the American embassy in Uruguay contacted Rajchman, and later the same year, on March 12, he was interviewed by the Office of Special Investigations (OSI).⁴ He then traveled to the United States, where he appeared as a witness for the prosecution in the extradition trial against John Demjanjuk. He also took the witness stand in Jerusalem when Demjanjuk was put on trial there in 1987-1988. Rajchman died in Montevideo, Uruguay in 2004.

Following Rajchman's death, an arrangement was made to have his 1944 Warsaw memoirs published, for the very first time. The memoirs first appeared in French in 2009 – sixty-four years after the end of the war – as *Je suis le dernier juif (I Am the Last Jew)* by the Paris publisher Les



John Demjanjuk on trial in Israel in April 1988. Source: Wikimedia Commons.

Arènes. Since no English translation is yet available of Rajchman's memoirs, I have chosen to refer in this analysis to the German edition, *Ich bin der letzte Jude. Treblinka 1942/43*.⁵ All page numbers within brackets below refer to the first edition of this German translation, which was made using the French translation as source text, but checked against the Yiddish original.⁶

Judging by Rajchman's testimony at the Demjanjuk trial, the memoirs were revised and edited in 1946 by a Yiddish poet named Nachum Bomze (alternative spelling Bumse). This is the only surviving manuscript, and is the one handed over to Yad Vashem and later presented as evidence at the Demjanjuk trial.⁷ That we are dealing not with the supposed original text dating from 1944 is clear from the last passage of the memoirs (pp. 155-156):

"Yes, I have lived for a year under the worst conditions in Treblinka. After the revolt in the camp I wandered aimlessly for two months, after which I reached Piastów and lived for two years as a Pole. After the Warsaw Uprising I spent three and a half month in a bunker in the capital [i.e. Warsaw], where I was liberated on January 17, 1945."

Accordingly, the published text dates from February 1945 at the very earliest.

In this article, I will scrutinize the most critical aspects of the portrayal of Treblinka in Rajchman's memoirs, namely the description of the alleged extermination procedure: the gas chamber killings and the subsequent cremation of the victims. In the process I will also refer to and make comparisons with, a declaration left by Rajchman to a Polish investigative commission in October 1945, his testimony from the 1987-1988 trial against John Demjanjuk in Jerusalem ⁸, and an interview with him conducted by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) in December 1988. I will also make frequent comparisons with the 1944 Treblinka account written by Jankel Wiernik, who arrived at the camp some months before Rajchman and is generally regarded as a key witness ⁹. Both Wiernik's *Rok w Treblince* (published the same year in the United States as *A Year in Treblinka* and later re-translated and published by Alexander Donat) and Rajchman's memoirs date from approximately the same time, and both men supposedly worked in the "death camp proper," the section of Treblinka containing the alleged gas chamber buildings and the mass graves (Rajchman even mentions Wiernik by name on page 89 of the memoirs). One might therefore assume that both men wrote down their recollections relatively fresh from memory.

2. Arrival at Treblinka

At his arrival to the camp early in the morning on October 11, 1942, Rajchman is separated from his sister Anna and forced to put the belongings of the other deportees in a huge heap on the ground in the reception camp (pp. 34-35). While Rajchman is working on sorting pieces of clothing, an SS man asks the prisoners if there are any barbers among them. Four men step out and Rajchman joins them as the fifth barber. The men are given clothes and scissors and told that they will work on sorting clothes until a new transport arrives (pp. 41-42). At the arrival of the next transport on the following day, Rajchman and the other barbers, ten in all, are taken to the gas chambers (p. 55), where supposedly the hair of the female victims was cut during a period of re-organization of the camp in September and October 1942, before a special haircutting barrack was placed near the entrance to the *Schlauch* ("tube"), the camouflaged, fenced-in pathway leading from the reception camp to Camp 2, where the alleged gas chambers were located. The barbers work in one of the chambers, with both its entrance and its exterior door standing open. On the floor of the chamber are an unstated number of benches and "several dozens of trunks." Female victims are led in through the corridor and the en-

trance door of the chamber. The women have their hair cut and are then showed out the exterior door (p. 56). The barbers remain in the chamber, guarded by Ukrainians, while the women are herded into the other chambers (p. 59). A few days after his arrival Rajchman is relieved of his work as a barber and brought to Camp 2 or *Totenlager* (p. 67), where he works on transporting corpses from the gas chambers to the grave pits, as a “dentist” pulling out gold teeth from the corpses, and as part of the work detail preparing the cremation pyres.

3. The Gas Chambers

3.1. The Two Gas Chamber Buildings and Their Capacities

Regarding the alleged gas chambers in the camp, Rajchman writes:

“It is important to note, that two gas chamber buildings were in operation at the time I started working in the Totenlager. The larger one contained ten gas chambers, each capable of holding four hundred persons. A gas chamber measured seven times seven meters. The people were packed like sardines. When a gas chamber was full, the next one was opened, and so on. For the smaller transports the older building with three gas chambers were used; four hundred fifty to five hundred people fit into each of its chambers.” (p. 87)

The new, larger gas chamber building is described as follows:

“At the end of the Schlauch you reached a white building, on which a large star of David had been attached. A German stood by the stairs, showed the way to the entrance and said with a smile: ‘Please, this way!’ The small number of steps led inside a corridor decorated with flowers. Long towels were hanging on the walls.

The gas chambers measured seven times seven meters. In the middle of the room there were shower heads, from which the gas flowed inside it. Along the wall a thick pipe ran, through which the air was sucked out. The doors were sealed all around.” (p. 39)

As for the gas which streamed in through the shower heads, we are informed later on (p. 132) that it was generated by “engines” (number or type not specified).

It is further mentioned that the entrances to the chambers in the new building had “iron doors” (p. 64) with observation windows in them (p. 60). The older, smaller gas chamber building also contained a room where the “dentists” worked on sorting the extracted tooth metal (p. 85).

One may compare the above description with the information on the size and capacities of the alleged gas chambers left by Jankel Wiernik:¹⁰

“When I arrived at the camp, three gas chambers were already in operation; another ten were added while I was there. A gas chamber measured 5 x 5 meters and was about 1.90 meters high.”

As for the capacity, Wiernik states:¹¹

“Between 450 and 500 persons were crowded into a chamber measuring 25 square meters.”

The above statements refer to the alleged old gas chambers. Regarding the new gas chambers, which Wiernik supposedly helped to construct, we read:¹²

“It turned out that we were building ten additional gas chambers, more spacious than the old ones, 7 by 7 meters or about 50 square meters. As many as 1,000 to 1,200 persons could be crowded into one gas chamber.”

In his testimony from the Eichmann trial, Wiernik gave the ceiling height of the new gas chambers as 1.90 m.¹³

Historian Yitzhak Arad on the other hand states that the chambers in the old building each measured 4m x 4m x 2.6m¹⁴, while the new chambers measured 4m x 8m x 2m.¹⁵ The reason for the ceiling being placed lower in the new chambers was, according to Arad, that it

“reduced the chambers’ total cubic volume, reduced the total gas requirement for killing the victims, and shortened [the] asphyxiation time.”¹⁶

Although Arad does not state any sources, it is clear that he is basing his description on the verdict from the 1964-1965 Treblinka trial in Düsseldorf, which state the very same dimensions; according to the same verdict, each chamber in the old building could hold 200 to 350 people, while the corresponding figure for the new building was 400 to 700 victims.¹⁷

In the table below I have summarized the above data referring to the dimensions and the capacity of the individual chambers:

	Old Dimen- sions [m]	Old Capacity [persons]	New Dimen- sions [m]	New Capacity [persons]
Rajchman	?	450 – 500	7 × 7 × ?	400
Wiernik	5 × 5 × 1.9	450 – 500	7 × 7 × 1.9	1000 – 1200
1965 Verdict	4 × 4 × 2.6	200 – 350	4 × 8 × 2	400 – 700

The incongruity between the descriptions is apparent. While Rajchman does not make the size of the old chambers clear, it follows from the capacity ascribed to them that they must have been larger than the new chambers. Wiernik on the other hand claims that the new chambers were twice as large as the old ones, with a corresponding increase in capacity. This contradiction is made even the more glaring by the fact that Rajchman and Wiernik agree perfectly on the capacity of the old chambers and the area of the new ones. Finally, the trial verdict disagrees with both Rajchmann and Wiernik on the dimensions of the new chambers and with Wiernik on the ceiling height of the old chambers.

Wiernik's claim that 20-25 people could fit into one square meter is clearly absurd. Rajchman's claim of 8 victims per square meter is certainly less so, but it is still not easily conceivable. Moreover, would not the "shower heads, from which the gas flowed inside" the chamber, have been frequently damaged by panicking victims in their death throes? It also seems extremely unlikely, that the observation windows in the doors would have been of much use, as the view would surely have been permanently blocked by someone's head or torso.

3.2. The Time Required for the Gassings and the Appearance of the Victims

How long did it take to kill the victims in the gas chambers? Rajchman informs us:

"In this building [the smaller older building] the gassing took twenty minutes, while in the newer building it took around forty-five minutes." (p. 87)

Some pages later we read:

"The corpses were in different states of appearance depending on if they came from the larger gas chambers or from the smaller ones. In the small ones, death came more quickly and was easier. Judging by the look of their faces, one could have thought that they were merely sleeping: their eyes were closed, and only on some of the gassed was the mouth distorted with bloody foam at the lips. The corpses were covered by sweat. Before death the people let their urine and excrements. The corpses from the larger gas chambers, in which death occurred more slowly, had gone through a terrible transformation. They had completely black faces, as if they had been burnt, and their bellies were bloated and colored blue." (pp. 90-91)

It is odd that Rajchman here calls the old gas chambers “the smaller ones” and the new ones “the larger gas chambers,” whereas the capacities ascribed to them clearly point to the old chambers being of larger size than the new ones. It is possible that either Rajchman himself or the translator is confusing the size of the respective buildings with the size of the chambers (a result of the word “gas chamber” often being used as synonymous with “gas chamber building”). Since the new building supposedly contained ten chambers instead of three, it was of course the larger of the two buildings.

Anyway, it is made clear that the gassings in the new chambers took at least twice as long time as in the old ones. But then, as shown above, the 1965 Treblinka trial verdict found that the new chambers had been built with a much lower ceiling in order to shorten the time required for the gasings! It hardly needs to be pointed out, moreover, that it hardly makes sense that the Germans would have constructed the new chambers to be not only of smaller size than the old ones, but also less time-effective. What happened to the famous “German efficiency”?

As for the description of the appearance of the victims, it is yet another testament to Rajchman’s unreliability. All current established “Holocaust” historians agree that the victims at Treblinka were killed with carbon monoxide from engine exhaust gas that was pumped into the gas chambers. As I have shown in another article ¹⁸, a distinctive cherry-red skin discoloration – resulting from the incorporation of carbon monoxide into the blood cells (carboxyhemoglobin) – appears in at least 95% of all cases of fatal carbon monoxide poisoning. Why did Rajchman not notice this peculiar cherry-pink color, and instead describe the corpses as either black and blue or lacking discoloration?

3.3. The Murder Method

As seen above, Rajchman clearly implies in his memoirs that the air was pumped out of the gas chambers and then, usually, replaced with engine exhaust gas.¹⁹ On October 12, 1945, Rajchman (as Henryk Reichman) testified as follows:²⁰

“The killings were carried out either by pumping out of the air or by introduction of CO [carbon monoxide]. Once, when fewer transports were arriving, the Germans conducted an experiment: They pumped out the air without introducing poison. When the doors opened after 48 hours, we found some living people inside.”

It is not clear which of the two “gas chamber buildings” our witness is referring to here ²¹, but regardless, the event described is impossible, not to

say absurd, given that between 450 and fifty and 500 victims were supposedly jammed inside each chamber, and that the doors to the chambers were “sealed all around.” Even without the air being pumped out, and with “only” a hundred, surely panicking, victims locked inside the hermetically sealed chamber, the oxygen would run out after a few hours²², and one can only hold one’s breath for so long.

The claim that vacuum was used as the killing agent is found in many early Treblinka eyewitness reports.²³ Another variant, found occasionally also in later witness statements (long after vacuum as well as steam had been discarded as murder weapons by the Holocaust chroniclers), is that the air was first sucked out, and then replaced with engine exhaust gas.²⁴ It appears that Rajchman supports this second version. The very notion of this murder method is so patently spurious, that it is amazing that it has ever occurred to any person capable of rational thinking. Why bother introducing lethal exhaust gas into the chamber, when the victims would have died anyway, and within minutes, from the deprivation of oxygen?

It should be mentioned in passing, that during the Demjanjuk trial in Jerusalem, Rajchman was unable to point out the location of the gassing engine, and did not know the number of engines used.²⁵

4. The Mass Graves and the Number of Victims

Rajchman claims to have worked for a considerable time at the mass graves. In the following passage, he presents his estimate of the dimensions of those grave pits:

“About ten of them [the Jewish working prisoners] are standing in the pit, placing the dead head by feet, so as to fit as many corpses into the pit as possible. Another group covered each layer with sand, before the next layer of corpses was placed on top of it. The mass graves were dug by an excavator (later there were three of them). They were huge, approximately fifty meters long, thirty meters wide and several stories deep – according to my estimate: four.” (p. 91)

Four stories correspond to between 8 and 12 meters. Let us, in order to make an a fortiori argument, assume a depth of 12 meters. The mass graves described by our witness would then measure 50m x 30m x 12m = 18,000 cubic meters. Assuming a theoretical maximum of 8 corpses per cubic meter²⁶, such a grave would have a capacity of (18,000 x 8 =) 144,000 corpses. Given that each layer of corpses was covered with a layer of sand, it is reasonable to reduce this capacity with one third, so that each grave could

hold ($144,000 \times 0.66 =$) 95,000. In reality, however, one would not be able to dig such a deep pit with vertical walls, since there would be a risk of collapse – the walls would have to be oblique, reducing the capacity further.²⁷ Moreover, such an extreme depth seems very unrealistic due to the risk of striking ground water – and Treblinka is located only some kilometers south of the large Bug River, on sandy soil!

Regarding the dimensions of the graves we will further note that Rajchman is contradicted on this point by another witness, Eliahu Rosenberg²⁸, who like Rajchman claims to have worked in Camp 2. Rosenberg claimed in a deposition from 1947 that the graves measured 120m x 15m x 6m, *i.e.* 10,800 cubic meters.

How many of these immense mass graves were there? Rajchman mentions in a passage concerning the emptying and the cleaning-up of the mass graves in June 1943: “Also the cleaning of the pits is progressing at a quicker pace. Ten of them are already emptied. The eleventh and last is one of the four large ones, containing approximately a quarter of a million corpses.” (p. 128)

Thus there were in total eleven mass graves, of which four were larger than the others. Do the dimensions given on page 91 refer to the smaller or the larger ones? This is not clearly stated in the text, but considering the capacity ascribed to the larger pits, it seems reasonable that said dimensions refer to the smaller ones. For the sake of argument, however, we will assume the same dimensions for all the grave pits.

If four of the graves each contained “a quarter of a million corpses” or even “more than 250,000 corpses” (p. 119), it follows that those pits contained together approximately 1 million corpses. Even if we assume, that the remaining seven pits contained “merely” 80,000 corpses – the estimate given in the verdict of the 1964 Treblinka trial²⁹ – this means a total victim figure of at least 1,560,000. Since we know from the Höfle document that 713,555 Jews were deported to Treblinka during 1942, and since all historians agree that only a relatively small number of Jewish deportees were sent to Treblinka during 1943, resulting in a hypothetical maximum victim figure of approximately 800,000, it follows that Rajchman has exaggerated the hypothetical number of victims by 100%.

In his 1988 interview for the USHMM, Rajchman claimed that the Germans “killed every day about 15,000 people”³⁰, *i.e.* 450,000 per month, and in the memoirs (p. 95), he writes that “Up until December 15 the transports arrived regularly, with about ten thousand people daily,” meaning that approximately 600,000 Jews would have been killed in the camp merely in the period stretching from Rajchman’s arrival to the date men-

tioned. In reality, less than half that number of Jews was deported to the camp during this time.³¹

On the map drawn up by the surveyor Trautsolt in late 1945, Camp 2 is shown as an irregular quadrilateral with an area of approximately 14,000 square meters (1.4 hectares).³² The mass graves of Rajchman covers a total area of at least (50m x 30m x 11 =) 16,500 square meters! Given that the pits must have been separated from each other by thick earth walls, their total area would completely have filled up Camp 2, even if its size instead was that indicated by the “Treblinka Death Camp Memorial Map”³³ drawn up by Peter Laponder, *i.e.* approximately 2 hectares. In other words, there would be no space left over in the *Totenlager* for the gas chambers or the “grates” used to incinerate the victims.

The dimensions given by our witness appears even more spurious when we consider them in relation to the mass graves identified by Polish archeologist Andrzej Kola at Bełżec in the late 90s. The present volumes of those thirty-three pits totaled 21,310 cubic meters. None of the pits (which were detected by drillings but left unexcavated) were deeper than 5.20 m. Twelve of the pits covered areas less than 100 square meters, while eleven were larger than 200 square meters.³⁴ The hypothetical maximum number of Bełżec victims, given by the Höfle document, amounts to 434,508. According to established historiography, those victims were all interred before being exhumed and burned. Thus, the total space used for their burial roughly equaled the volume of one of Rajchman’s eleven mass graves. How does this add up if, as our witness claims, the burial detail at Treblinka utilized the available space as efficiently as possible? (In reality, the mass graves at Bełżec would have been able to contain only a fraction of the alleged victims).³⁵

In December 1945, Rajchman visited the former site of the “death camp” together with Rachel (Ruchl) Auerbach and other members of an “historical commission.”³⁶ Why, we may ask, is it that those investigators failed to uncover evidence for the enormous mass graves described by the witnesses?³⁷ After all, did they not have Mr. Rajchman himself for their guide?

5. The Incineration of the Corpses

5.1. When Did the Cremations Commence?

On page 113 of his memoirs, Rajchman writes:

“In December 1942 pyres were erected for the cremation of the corpses. But the corpses would not burn. A pyre was therefore built following special instructions. While an engine supplied fresh air, a large amount of gasoline was poured over the corpses. Yet still they would not burn satisfactorily. At least a thousand corpses were cremated using this method, but this wasn’t enough for the murderers.”

As a result of this failure, the SS called in a cremation “specialist,” identified by the French editor of the memoirs as SS-Scharführer Herbert Floß.³⁸ Rajchman states that Floß arrived at the camp in January 1943 and began constructing “grates” for the cremations already “after a few days” (p. 114). According to historian Arad on the other hand, the cremations in the camp began in March 1943.³⁹

5.2. The Construction of the “Grates”

It is commonly held that all corpses at Treblinka were incinerated on primitive pyres equipped with grates made up of railway tracks – the so-called “roasters.” In his memoirs, Rajchman describes the construction of these open air cremation facilities as follows:

“He [the ‘cremation expert’] had laid out more than thirty meters of railway rails. Right on top of the ground a pair of concrete foundations were cast, both with a height of approximately 50 centimeters. A pyre was one and a half meter wide. On top of the foundations six railway rails were placed, that was all. ‘The Artist’ [=the ‘expert’] ordered us to put women, particularly fat women, on the first layer on the grate, face down. The second layer could consist of whatever was brought – men, women or children – and so on, layer upon layer like a pyramid, up to a height of two meters.

The dead were thrown upon the pyre by a special commando, the Feuerkolonne. Two pyre workers received the corpses brought by the carriers. The first one grabbed hold of the hand and foot on the left side of the body, while the second grabbed hold of the hand and foot on the other side, whereupon they threw the dead person on top of the pyre. Around 2,500 corpses were placed on such a pyre. Then the ‘expert’ ordered us to lay dry branches under the grate and to light them. Within a few minutes the fire would take so it was difficult to approach the crematorium from as far as fifty meters away.” (pp. 114-115)

In the Polish testimony from October 1945, Rajchman maintained:⁴⁰

“There were no crematoria with furnaces at Treblinka. There was only a primitive arrangement of grates made from rails placed on supports of reinforced concrete which could hold 2500 corpses.”

In his Demjanjuk trial testimony, Rajchman specified that each roaster was 30 m long with railway rails placed every 15 cm on the 50 cm high brick – not reinforced concrete – foundations.⁴¹

In the 1988 USHMM interview, Rajchman stated that Floß

*“took 5 or 6 railroad rails each 30 meters long. Around it [sic], he built a brick wall. He laid the tracks 15 centimeters apart [...] and one and a half meters above the ground. [...] we covered them with 2,500 corpses, counting.”*⁴²

Here the number of rails and their length is the same, but the foundation – here apparently a brick wall running around the entire contraption – is three times as high.

The notion that all the corpses were counted before being burned also appears in the memoirs (p. 126). Here Rajchman claims that a special group of workers had the task to count all the victims (or rather the heads of the victims, in case they were separated from the bodies – our witness does not want to save his reader from the horrific details...) and report the number to the SS officer in charge of the *Totenlager*.

Rajchman's description in the memoirs and the Demjanjuk testimony is similar to the findings of the 1964 Düsseldorf Treblinka trial:⁴³

“[Each grate] consisted of a concrete base approximately 70 cm thick, upon which 5 to 6 railroad rails of perhaps 25 to 30 m length lay at small intervals. Under the rails burned a fire, while 2,000 to 3,000 of the bodies of the Jews killed in the gas chambers were loaded on the grate and then burned.”

Jankel Wiernik on the other hand gave the following description of the grates:⁴⁴

“This is the way in which he got the inferno started. He put a machine for exhuming the corpses into operation, an excavator which could dig up 3,000 corpses at one time. A fire grate made of railroad rails was placed on concrete foundations 100 to 150 meters in length. The workers piled the corpses on the grate and set them on fire.”

Thus, Wiernik remembered the grates as being 3 to 5 times longer than Rajchman's recollections would have them to be!

5.3. The Number of “Grates”

The total incineration capacity would naturally depend on the number of “grates.” In the memoirs, Rajchman writes that by March 1943, “there were six of them already” (p. 117). However, this number proved insufficient:

“In the second half of April we are visited by camp staff members led by the head of our camp, Matias [Heinrich Matthes...]. Another oven with a much larger capacity is to be built in the immediate vicinity of the gas chambers, so that the corpses can be burned at once. This work takes ten days. [...] By the end of April the oven is still not yet ready. The head of the camp orders that another oven should be put up next to the gas chambers within the next few hours.” (pp. 123-124)

This would mean that all in all there were eight “grates,” one or two of them larger than the others. In the October 1945 testimony, however, the total number of cremation grates is given as five to six.⁴⁵

The reason for the new larger grate or grates appears to have been – believe it or not – the planned mass murder of a group of Jews outside the reach of the Germans.⁴⁶

“Reichman also said the Nazis had prepared a special incinerator in Treblinka for British Jews, who were to be deported under Adolf Hitler’s master plan for a Jewish-free Europe.

‘This was the incinerator for the British Jews,’ he said, pointing to a diagram of Treblinka. ‘The Germans planned to bring them there when they captured Britain. It was built in a very solid manner and could not be moved. It remained there until the end.’”

The mere notion that the Germans three months after Stalingrad would entertain hopes of defeating Great Britain and have all Jews of the island nation shipped over to Europe to be gassed is nothing else than laughable.

It is interesting to compare Rajchman’s claim of 6-8 roasters with the account of key witness Jankel Wiernik:⁴⁷

“Because they were in a hurry, the Germans built additional fire grates and augmented the crews serving them, so that from 10,000 to 12,000 corpses were cremated at one time.”

Since Wiernik claimed that 3,000 corpses could be loaded per grate, it follows that the “grates” numbered at most four. On the other hand, Wiernik’s own map of the camp, as well as the map used during the Düsseldorf Treblinka trial, shows only two grates.⁴⁸

5.4. Do Decomposed Corpses Burn More Easily?

In the memoirs' description of the cremation process we find the following statement:

"It has turned out, that the exhumed corpses burn considerably better than those fresh from the gas chambers." (p. 117)

But is it really true that decomposed corpses will burn more easily than "fresh" ones? The answer is a simple no, since the decomposition process causes a loss of fat (an important asset in the heating balance of the cremation), and since most if not all of the methane produced during the same process (a possible asset) would have been lost during the exhumation process. A decomposed corpse is therefore harder to burn than a fresh one.⁴⁹

5.5. The Time Required for the Individual Cremations

Regarding how long it took to turn a pyre full of corpses into ash, Rajchman writes:

"The grates were loaded during the day and then lit at around half past six." (p. 117)

At the Jerusalem Demjanjuk trial, Rajchman testified:⁵⁰

"They used to light the fire with some dry sticks like toothpicks. They would be lit with a regular match and placed beneath the furnace and fire would start slowly, but then it would burn with such an intensity, that 50 meters away from the furnace, it was impossible to stand. Until the morning everything was almost burned in the furnace."

Also in the memoirs it is stated (p. 139) that the incineration was completed by the morning, after having started in the evening on the day before. If we generously take "until the morning" to mean until 10 AM, Rajchman's statements would mean that the whole cremation process took around 15 hours and 30 minutes. That the duration alleged by our witness is not very realistic can be seen from the documentation of a cremation of animal carcasses which took place in Whithorn, Scotland in April 2001. On this occasion, 511 bovine, 90 sheep and 3 pig cadavers were burned on two pyres with a total surface area of 150 square meters (compared to Rajchman's 45). The cremation lasted for three full days.⁵¹

On the other hand, two Jews named Motke Zaidl and Itzhak Dugin, who supposedly worked on burning corpses of Jews shot by the *Einsatzgruppen* in Lithuania on pyres similar to those reportedly used at Treblinka, have stated that the outdoor cremation process usually took no less than "seven or eight days."⁵²

5.6. The Capacity of the “Grates” and the Firewood Required

As seen above, most of Rajchman’s grates had a surface area of $30\text{ m} \times 1.5\text{ m} = 45$ square meters. Given the reported construction (five to six 30-m-long railway rails placed on concrete or brick foundations) it seems most logical that the corpses were placed parallel with the shorter side of the pyre.

How many corpses could then be placed in each layer on the grate? Like Carlo Mattogno, we will assume for an average body a theoretical surface area of $1.75\text{ m} \times 0.50\text{ m}$, including the necessary intervening space for the passage of the products of combustion.⁵³ It follows that each layer on Rajchman’s grate could contain 60 corpses. We will assume for each layer of corpses a height of 20 centimeter. Since Rajchman states that the corpses were piled “up to a height of two meter” on top of the grate, there would be room for ten such layers, equaling 600 corpses. However, Rajchman also states that the corpses were arranged “like a pyramid,” *i.e.* that each new layer was shorter than the preceding one. If viewed from the side the pyre looked like a typical Egyptian pyramid, *i.e.* a regular triangle, the capacity would be half of 600, *i.e.* 300 corpses. We will be generous, however, and assume that 400 corpses were loaded. Still, this is only 16% of Rajchman’s figure of 2500 corpses loaded per grate. A grate loaded with this number of bodies would have been 9 meters tall, if each layer was of the same length, and approximately twice that height, if the pyramid shape was employed.

But how many corpses could the pyre described by our witness handle at a time, in reality? Revisionist researcher Carlo Mattogno has determined, based on documentation of outdoor incineration of human corpses on pyres with metal grates in India and incineration of cattle cadavers, as well as his own experiments, that approximately 3.5 kg of firewood is required in order to incinerate 1 kg of organic substance, even in the case of mass incineration of partially decomposed corpses.⁵⁴ We should stress here that with firewood, we mean seasoned, *i.e.* dry wood. As I have shown in another article⁵⁵, the firewood used for cremations at Treblinka must have been green, *i.e.* fresh wood, which has a considerably lower thermal value due to its higher moisture content. This means that the amount of fuel wood necessary per kilogram organic substance would be up to 100% higher. Nevertheless, to make our argument stronger, we will assume a fuel requirement per kilogram corpse of 3.5 kg firewood. Thus, we may disregard in our calculations the possible additional heating content provided by the hypothetical use of liquid fuel (such as gasoline or kerosene).

Like Mattogno, we will assume an average weight of 45 kg for the corpses, taking into account the presence of children among the hypothetical victims and the loss of weight in the corpse due to desiccation.⁵⁶ To cremate one corpse one would therefore need ($45 \text{ kg} \times 3.5 =$) approximately 160 kg of firewood.

The grate would be able to accommodate ($30 \text{ m} \times 1.5 \text{ m} \times 0.5 \text{ m} =$) 22.5 cubic meters of firewood, if we are to trust Rajchman's memoirs, or ($30 \text{ m} \times 1.5 \text{ m} \times 1.5 \text{ m} =$) 67.5 cubic meters of firewood, if we are to believe Rajchman's statement in the USHMM interview. It should be pointed out here, that while our witness mentions "dry branches" being used to lit the pyres, he never mentions the huge stacks of firewood that would have to be used to fuel the grates

The weight of a cubic meter of normally stacked firewood usually lies between 340 and 450 kg.⁵⁷ Some sources give slightly higher estimates, such as A. Marcantonio, who has given the weight of 1 cubic meter of firewood as 600 kg.⁵⁸ While this estimate may refer to very densely stacked firewood – and the wood used in a pyre could not be too densely stacked as one would want to keep the inflow of oxygen as unhindered as possible – we will use it for the sake of the argument.

For Rajchman's grate we could accordingly use a maximum amount of either ($22.5 \text{ kg} \times 600 =$) 13,500 kg or ($67.5 \text{ kg} \times 600 =$) 40,500 kg of firewood. This in turn corresponds to ($13,500 \text{ kg} \div 160 \text{ kg/corpse} =$) 84 or ($40,500 \text{ kg} \div 160 \text{ kg/corpse} =$) 253 corpses. The grate could thus, at the very most, handle 10% of the 2,500 corpses alleged by Rajchman. The possible counter-argument that one somehow could have added more fuel to the fire during the cremation is refuted by Rajchman's statement that the heat from the fire made it "difficult to approach the crematorium from as far as fifty meters away."

If we assume that the "larger grates" mentioned by Rajchman could handle twice as large a load as the small ones, then the 6 ordinary-sized grates and the two larger ones could burn at the most 2,530 corpses at a time. As mentioned above, it is reasonable to assume that it would take 3 days to incinerate a pyre, rather than the approximately 15 hours suggested by Rajchman. We will be generous again, to make our argument a fortiori, and assume that the cremation commando somehow managed to load, incinerate and cool down a pyre every 48 hours. This would mean a maximum incineration capacity of 1,265 corpses per day. Accordingly, it would take 632 days – or 1 year, 8 months and 23 days – to incinerate the alleged 800,000 Treblinka victims (this is the figure stated in the last edition of Raul Hilberg's standard work *The Destruction of the European Jews*).⁵⁹ As

we have seen, Rajchman claims that only about 1,000 corpses were burned during December 1942⁶⁰, and that the “roasters” were put into operation in January 1943, with the last two pyres being constructed in late April. It would thus have taken at the very least until late September 1944 to complete the cremation of the alleged 800,000 victims. In reality, the Treblinka “death camp” was liquidated in September 1943, and the Red army reached the area in August 1944.

Then again, there are additional factors disadvantageous to Rajchman’s claims. First, the calculation above assumes that all roasters were put into operation at the same time, which was not the case according to our victim. Second, it is unreasonable to assume that the grates were in operation for 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, even in snow and rain. Third, it is inevitable that the rails used in the grates would warp due to pressure and heat and have to be replaced from time to time, so that additional time would be lost. Finally, it must be stressed again that (at least as far as this author is aware) Rajchman is the only witness who claims that there were as many as 6 or 8 grates in use at Treblinka.

All points to the fact, that corpses were cremated on grate-equipped pyres in Treblinka and the other Aktion Reinhardt camps (Bełżec and Sobibór), but that said contraptions were of dimensions woefully inadequate to handle the many hundreds of thousands of alleged victims, the reason for this being that there really were only ever some tens of thousands of corpses to burn at each site, as the camps were in fact not “extermination camps,” but transit camps.

5.7. Himmler’s Visit to Treblinka

According to Rajchman’s memoirs, *Reichsführer-SS* Heinrich Himmler visited Treblinka to inspect the cleaning-up process:

“It is obvious that the murderers will have to finish their work by a certain date. In Camp 1 this is by July 1. We learn that a special guest is expected: Himmler. Preparations for his reception are under way. Two days before the deadline the work is completed.

It is July 1. We were supposed to have worked also in the afternoon, but at the last moment there was a counter-order.

e are locked inside our barrack. Through a small window we see that a large number of guards have been posted all around the place. A few minutes later Himmler arrives with his convoy. He inspects the gas chambers and then walks to the place where the graves once were and where now everything is spotlessly clean. Himmler looks very satisfied.

He laughs, and his underlings, who are standing some meters away, are beaming with pleasure.” (p. 129)

Contemporary German documents, however, show that Himmler visited “installations of *Aktion Reinhard*” during March 1943. From the same material it is clear that Himmler inspected Sobibór,⁶¹ and although the name Treblinka does not appear, Treblinka’s commandant at that time, Franz Stangl, is listed as being recommended for promotion⁶², which points to the likely fact that the camp was included among the “installations” visited by Himmler.

Why does Rajchman place the visit in mid-summer, while in reality it took place at the end of winter or during the first days of spring? This contradiction becomes even more evident when one considers what orthodox historiography has to say about the Himmler visit. Yitzhak Arad writes:⁶³

“The last camp where cremation of the corpses was instituted was Treblinka. During Himmler’s visit to the camp at the end of February/beginning of March 1943, he was surprised to find that in Treblinka the corpses of over 700,000 Jews who had been killed there had not yet been cremated. The very fact that the cremation began immediately after his visit makes it more than possible that Himmler, who was very sensitive about the erasure of the crimes committed by Nazi Germany, personally ordered the cremating of the corpses there.”

Thus the circumstances of Himmler’s visit as described by our witness is rather the opposite of those asserted by the historians (who in turn are relying on statements from other eyewitnesses, particularly Wiernik): in the account of the former, Himmler visits Treblinka on July 1 and find the mass graves empty and “spotlessly clean,” while according to the latter, the Reichsführer-SS inspects the camp “at the end of February/beginning of March” and finds the mass graves full of unburned corpses!

As seen above, Rajchman states (on p. 128) that of eleven graves, ten had been emptied and cleaned by June 1943, and that the whole work was completed by July 1. Jankel Wiernik claims, however, that one fourth of the work remained by the end of July.⁶⁴

“July was drawing to a close and the weather was blistering hot. The hardest work was at the mass graves, and the men who exhumed the corpses for cremation were barely able to stand on their feet because of the sickening odors. By now about 75 per cent of the corpses had been cremated.”

One might think that this contradiction is negligible. However, Wiernik’s account implies that much of the exhumation work was still left unfinished

by the time of the prisoner revolt and mass escape on August 2, 1943, while Rajchman claims that the work was complete and everything “spotlessly clean” more than one month prior to the uprising. Given that the two accounts allegedly were penned at around the same time, more or less fresh out of respective author’s memory, this discrepancy is more important than it would appear at first glance.

One might possibly raise the counter-argument that Rajchman refers to another visit by Himmler, perhaps a follow-up inspection. This argument would, however, run into two serious obstacles. First, why did Rajchman forget to mention the first visit? Second, why is it that this hypothetical July 1 visit appears in no other eyewitness account?

6. Miscellaneous Anomalies and Absurdities

6.1. The “Dentists”

According to the memoirs (p. 84), the “dentist commando” in Camp 2 consisted of 20 prisoners. Some pages later, however, he notes that the pulling-out of teeth was carried out by “one or more six-man-strong groups” according to the size of the arriving transport, while the other members worked with cleaning and sorting the extracted gold teeth and dentures (p. 86). As seen above in Section 4, our witness states in his memoirs that “up until December 15 [1942] the transports arrived regularly, with about ten thousand people daily.” This would mean a daily workload of 500 corpses per “dentist.”⁶⁵ One must consider in this context that the onset of rigor mortis (the stiffening of the dead body) would make extracting teeth from the dead problematic:

“Rigor mortis begins to appear in the muscles of the eyelids and the jaw (at earliest approx 20 minutes postmortem), the latter becoming tightened resulting from the stiffening of the masticatory muscles. After that, postmortem rigidity begins to affect larger muscle groups with stiffening of elbow or knee joints approx 2 to 6 hours after death. [66...] When fully developed, rigor mortis may lead to such a rigidity of the body that it may be capable of supporting the whole body weight. In such cases, even the most forceful efforts to break down rigor mortis may be fruitless. [67...] In cool and temperate climate zones loosening of rigor mortis, reflected by a secondary relaxation of the muscles (meaning a decrease in tension after full development of postmortem muscle stiffening) begins approx 24 to 36 hours postmortem.”⁶⁸

The “dentists” would therefore in many cases have to pry open the mouth of the victim before extracting gold teeth or dentures present.

It should be noted that another Camp 2 witness, Eliahu Rosenberg, in a video-taped interview for Yad Vashem has stated that the “dentist commando” consisted of only 3-5 men.⁶⁹ According to the Eichmann trial testimony of former “dentist” Avraham Lindwasser, the team originally consisted of 4-6 men, but was increased to 12 men at the time the exhumation of the mass graves began (*i.e.* in early 1943).⁷⁰

6.2. The Transport from Ostrowiec

On page 95-96 of the memoirs, Rajchman tells of a rare case of resistance from the alleged victims:

“On December 10 a Jewish transport from Ostrowiec arrived at the railway station. The camp administration was informed, that another transport would arrive at Treblinka the next morning. It was arranged that the Jews from Ostrowiec would be gassed the same evening. The order was carried out. We were locked inside the barracks and could not see anything. We only heard the usual screams. When we went to our work places the next morning, however, we discovered traces of what had happened during the night. [...] A group consisting of several dozens of men had refused to enter the gas chambers. Naked as they were they, they used their fists for defense and would not let themselves be forced inside. Upon this the SS-men opened fire with their machine guns and killed the rebels at the spot.”

The German translator adds in a footnote to page 95 that “The transport with Jews from Ostrowiec arrived in fact on October 12.” This is confirmed by Yitzhak Arad, who in his standard work on the Reinhardt camps lists no transports from Ostrowiec after October 12, 1942.⁷¹ The curious thing is that on page 63, Rajchman mentions a transport from Ostrowiec arriving in October 1942, just days after his own arrival! Why the need to invent a second transport from the same town?

6.3. “Iwan”

As has already been mentioned, Rajchman appeared as a witness at the 1987-1988 Jerusalem trial against John Demjanjuk, as well as at the American extradition trial which preceded it. At the time, Demjanjuk stood accused of being “Ivan the Terrible,” a particularly vicious Ukrainian guard who not only had handled the engine providing the lethal carbon monoxide used to kill the victims in the alleged gas chambers in Treblinka, but also

on his own initiative carried out a large number of monstrous atrocities against the Jews deported to the camp. In his interview for USHMM, which took place seven months after Demjanjuk had been found guilty and sentenced to death on April 25, 1988, Rajchman related:⁷²

"I was a witness at a court proceeding of Ivan Demjanjuk. Once in the United States, and now in Israel. I knew him as the 'devil Ivan'. I didn't know then that his name was Ivan Demjanjuk. [...] He was working as a mechanic blacksmith who leaked in the gas into the gas chamber. [...] He was a sadist, taking pleasure in his work."

One especially noteworthy incident of cruelty supposedly took place in the death camp proper, when Rajchman and another inmate named Leon Finkelstein were working as "dentists" pulling out gold teeth from the corpses and cleaning them. In the memoirs the event in question is described as follows:

"One day, while I and another dentist named Finkelschtejn were washing the teeth [extracted from victims] by the well, Iwan came up to us with a poker in his hand. He ordered Finkelschtejn to lie down on the ground, and then he stabbed his behind with the poker. He called this a joke. The poor man did not cry out even once, but only moaned slightly. Iwan laughed and shouted at him: 'Stay down, or I will shoot you!'" (p. 132)

At the Demjanjuk trial Rajchman presented a virtually identical version of the story: "He injured that Finkelstein, he was bleeding and suffering great pain, intense pain, but he was not permitted to scream, because Ivan had given him an order – 'If you scream, I'll shoot you'"⁷³

In the USHMM interview from 1988, however, Rajchman recounted the same tale thus:⁷⁴

"[He] took a drill that was used to drill hole in wood and stuck the drill into Finkelstein's backside. In the backside [...] laughing, continually laughing. He screamed, 'Gevalt!' Finkelstein then was crying [...] Iwan] even told him that if he will not stop screaming, he will [...] he said [...] he had so much joy doing that."

We should note here that it is likely Finkelstein, not "Iwan" who is supposed to have screamed "Gevalt," since this is a Yiddish exclamation of incredulity. Thus in the first version, Finkelstein does "not cry out even once," while in the other Iwan threatens him since he will "not stop screaming"!

Most astoundingly, it would appear that neither Rajchman nor Finkelstein himself – who likewise survived the war to testify before the Polish

investigative committee – thought it worthwhile to recall this grotesque torture in 1945. In an opinion piece written in 1990, while Demjanjuk was still on death row, Patrick Buchanan wrote that

*“among the atrocities for which Demjanjuk must hang is using a drill to bore into the rectum of prisoner Finkelstein. Only, in his 1945 sworn testimony, Finkelstein did not mention this. Nor did Henryk Reichman, who testified at the Jerusalem trial that he saw Demjanjuk use the drill, mention the horror in his sworn statement.”*⁷⁵

What makes Rajchman’s story even more spurious is the way he describes the general treatment of the Jewish detainees in Treblinka:⁷⁶

“Reichman told the court that the camp’s inmates tried to perform all their duties ‘stooped over, because if anyone stood straight he would be beaten [...]. And you knew if you were beaten in the face, you would die that night’.”

Rajchman repeated the same claim in the 1988 USHMM interview:⁷⁷

“We continually had to be on guard that our faces are free of injuries and show no marks or scars of the facing [sic]. Whoever had a bloody face or scars was taken out in the evening, lined up and shot. They looked if we can still pick up our legs. If not, they took it [sic] out and killed us.”

But if prisoners with visible injuries, and those who could not “pick up their legs” were shot, how did Leon Finkelstein, who supposedly had been brutally stabbed by “Iwan” and bled profusely from his behind, survive his stay in the camp? Rajchman asserts in his memoirs (p. 133) that an inmate physician, Dr. Zimmerman, took care of Finkelstein’s wound, but is it really plausible that he would have been able to work without the guards noticing that he was wounded?

When Rajchman was interviewed by the Office of Special Investigations in March 1980, he was shown a photograph of Demjanjuk taken in 1951, which he identified as the sadistic guard “Iwan.” At the time he was also shown a photograph of Demjanjuk taken during the war, which he did not identify as “Iwan.” However, a year later, at an extradition trial in Cleveland, Ohio, he did identify the same picture as portraying the guard in question.⁷⁸

In the end, Demjanjuk’s sentence was repealed. It turned out that the Jewish witnesses – including Rajchman – were “mistaken”: John Demjanjuk had not been “Iwan the Terrible,” and the most crucial piece of evidence against him, an identification card from the SS training camp at Trawniki, had turned out to be a forgery. In 1993 Demjanjuk returned to

the United States as a free man (although as is well known, the witch-hunt for him did not end).⁷⁹

6.4. Treblinka I

In his memoirs, Rajchman writes that the insurgents had planned to assault the nearby labor camp known as Treblinka I after their escape from the “death camp”:

“As soon as we were free, we would go to the Treblinka labor camp to liberate the Christians and Jews detained there.” (pp. 140-141)

When testifying at the Jerusalem Demjanjuk trial, Rajchman stated that the Germans “built 2 km away from Treblinka a second camp which was for smugglers”⁸⁰, and in the USHMM interview, he says that the Germans

*“covered up their deeds so much that two kilometers from the original camp they established a [...] penal camp, for smugglers and criminals. That camp they also called Treblinka. They wanted this camp as a cover-up for the future. If someone will discover the real Treblinka with their [sic] gas chambers, they will have a place to show that this was a place for criminals.”*⁸¹

One should note here the use of the word “original.” In reality, Treblinka I was established in autumn 1941, more than half a year before the opening of Treblinka II on July 22, 1942.⁸² Rajchman’s claim therefore makes no sense (although it could possibly be explained as a repetition of hearsay).

6.5. The Tall Tale of the Flammable Blood

I have saved Rajchman’s most astounding tale of horror until last:

“At one time we put up a grate beside a large grave, into which more than 250.000 corpses had been thrown. The roast was loaded as usual and lit in the evening. There was a strong wind, and the fire burned so intensely, that it spread to the large opened grave. The blood from a quarter of a million human beings went up in flame and burned until the evening of the following day.

All of the leading camp staff came to take a look at this wonder. They marveled at this fantastic fire. The blood rose to the surface of the ground and ignited like fuel.” (p. 119)

That blood, whose plasma consists of 90% water, most certainly is not flammable, hardly needs to be pointed out. Rajchman’s tale is therefore nothing but nonsense.

As mentioned above, Rajchman accompanied Yiddish writer Rachel Auerbach on her visit to the former “extermination camp.” It is thus possible that our witness is the source for her sensational statement, found in the 1946 article “In the fields of Treblinka,” that blood is “a first-class combustion material.”⁸³ Thus speak the voices of “truth and memory”!

7. Conclusion

Chil Rajchman’s account of the alleged extermination camp Treblinka II is fraught with more or less apparent contradictions and absurdities. To trust this man on his word that the Treblinka camp was equipped with homicidal gas chambers, where hundreds of thousands, if not millions of Jews were murdered in cold blood – in spite of the complete lack of material (or documentary) evidence to back up this allegation – is to be a pious fool.

As shown in the first section of this article, the published text of the memoirs dates from February 1945 at the very earliest. Since Jankel Wiernik’s book *Rok w Treblince* was published clandestinely in Warsaw already in 1944, it is fully possible that Rajchman read it and used it at least partially as a model for his “recollections.” On the other hand, some of Rajchman’s statements in the memoirs glaringly contradict Wiernik’s account, such as the descriptions of the capacity of the gas chambers and the size of the cremation pyres. Yet the two accounts reportedly derive from about the same time – less than a year after the escape from the alleged horrors at Treblinka. Why then the blatant discrepancies, if indeed we are dealing here with recollections of a genuine gas chamber mass murder?

The most revealing part of Rajchman’s account concerns the cremations in the camp. Like Richard Glazar, who left an important statement regarding the procurement of firewood at Treblinka,⁸⁴ Rajchman has involuntarily and unwittingly revealed the fact that only a fraction of the Jews deported to the camp could have been cremated there. Since no-one has been able to find the remains of hundreds of thousands of uncremated corpses at the former camp site,⁸⁵ it follows that Rajchman thus has indirectly confirmed the revisionist hypothesis of Treblinka II being a transit camp, from which the vast majority of the Jewish deportees were sent on to the occupied territories in the east.

Like in most other Treblinka accounts, the real function of the camp appears in Rajchman’s memoirs as an elaborate ruse, a clever fiction disseminated by the Germans to deceive the Jews in the ghettos:

“At my side [on the train to Treblinka] sits another friend, an engineer named Katz. He assures me, that we are going to the Ukraine, that we will be resettled there, and that we will be able to cultivate the land there. He knows this, since a German lieutenant had told him. The German was the administrator of a government-owned farm in Jedlinka, six kilometers from our Shtetl. He had told him this confidentially, in gratitude for his repair work on an electric motor.” (p. 30)

The Ukrainian train guards, who are described (p. 29) as terrorizing the deportees and robbing them of their valuables, also did their part to keep up the supposed ruse:

“I asked him [a Ukrainian guard], for how long we would travel. He answered: Three days,⁸⁶ since we are going to the Ukraine.” (p. 31)

But of course, the orthodox historians assure us, such words were only part of a huge, incredibly artful lie. The unquestionable, undeniable historical truth on the other hand, they tell us, is told by people such as Chil Rajchman!

Notes

- ¹ Interview with Chiel Rajchman, December 7, 1988; USHMM Archives RG-50.030*0185, p. 14.
- ² *Ibid.* Here Rajchman moreover claims that the Polish government insisted on him using the name Romanowski (Ruminowsky) while serving as the “director of a big company.”
- ³ Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 16; “We are honored with visits to our home by the Vice Presidents of the Republic [...] We are helping our country develop new industries.”
- ⁴ Testimony of Chil Rajchman in Jerusalem on March 10, 1987; *Demjanjuk Trial Proceedings Transcript*, Vol. 4, T002199-T002216.
- ⁵ Chil Rajchman, *Ich bin der letzte Jude*. Treblinka 1942/43. Aufzeichnungen für die Nachwelt, Piper, Munich 2009.
- ⁶ Chil Rajchman, *Ich bin der letzte Jude*, op.cit., information on unnumbered copyright page.
- ⁷ Testimony of Chil Rajchman in Jerusalem on March 10, 1987; *Demjanjuk Trial Proceedings Transcript*, Vol. 4, T002168f, T002184. According to the foreword to the German edition of the memoirs, “a copy of the Yiddish typescript is kept in the Maison de la culture Yiddish – Bibliothèque Medem in Paris”; Chil Rajchman, *Ich bin der letzte Jude*, op.cit., p. 27 (unnumbered footnote).
- ⁸ Here I have had to rely on a summary of the English-language trial transcript which is available online at: <http://members.fortunecity.com/zuzak/transcripts/transcripts01.html>
- ⁹ Yitzhak Arad for example makes a total of 25 references to Wiernik’s account in his standard work on the Reinhardt camps, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka. The Operation Reinhard Death Camps*, Indiana University press, Bloomington/Indianapolis 1987

- ¹⁰ Alexander Donat (ed.), *The Death Camp Treblinka: A Documentary*, Holocaust Library, New York 1979, p. 157.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 158.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, p. 161.
- ¹³ State of Israel. The Trial of Adolf Eichmann. Record of Proceedings in the District Court of Jerusalem, Jerusalem 1993, Vol. III, p. 1205.
- ¹⁴ Yitzhak Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, op.cit., p. 42.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 119.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁷ Adalbert Rückerl, *NS-Vernichtungslager im Spiegel deutscher Strafprozesse*, dtv, Frankfurt am Main 1977, p. 203, 224-226.
- ¹⁸ Thomas Kues, "Skin discoloration caused by carbon monoxide poisoning – Reality vs. Holocaust eye-witness testimony," online: <https://codoh.com/library/document/skin-discoloration-caused-by-carbon-monoxide/>
- ¹⁹ On page 88 of the memoirs Rajchman writes that "the SS men or the Ukrainians looked through the observation windows to see, if everyone was dead so that the [exterior] doors could be opened." This means that the pumping out of the air would have occurred prior to the pumping in of the exhaust gas, and not afterward (as a means of ventilation) since the opening of the large exterior doors would have rendered such mechanical air exchange more or less meaningless.
- ²⁰ Zdzisław Łukaszkiewicz, *Obóz straceń w Treblinke*, Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, Warsaw 1948, p. 12.
- ²¹ The memoirs (p. 88) suggest the new building, however.
- ²² According to the Treblinka trial verdict from 1965 each of the new chambers had a volume of 64 cubic meters. For the sake of argument we will assume, however, the larger volume stated by Wiernik, namely 93 cubic meters. The lungs of an average human being have a total capacity of 4,000 – 6,000 cubic centimeters (4 – 6 liter), while an average breath contains 500 cubic centimeters of air (of which 21% is oxygen). An average adult draws 10-20 breaths per minute and inhales in total 11,000 liters of air per day (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human_lung). Even if we assume the lower number of breaths per minute (in order to compensate for the presence of children among the hypothetical victims) the hundred victims in our example would inhale ([500 x 10] x 100 =) 500,000 cubic centimeters or 0.5 cubic meters of air per minute, from which follows that the air in the chamber would be all have been inhaled one time within approximately (93 : 0.5 =) 186 minutes, or 3 hours and 6 minutes. This length of time is clearly too high, however, since we have not considered the total body volume of the victims.
- ²³ Jürgen Graf & Carlo Mattogno, *Treblinka. Extermination Camp or Transit Camp?*, Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago 2004, pp. 64-68.
- ²⁴ Cf. T. Kues, "Treblinka – More Bumblebees from Bomba (part 1 of 2)," *Smith's Report*, No. 166 (November 2009), p. 9. See also T. Kues, "Israel Cymlich & Oskar Strawczynski, Escaping Hell in Treblinka (review)," *Smith's Report*, No. 168 (January 2010).
- ²⁵ Testimony of Chil Rajchman in Jerusalem on March 10, 1987; *Demjanjuk Trial Proceedings Transcript*, Vol. 4, T002265f.

- ²⁶ Jürgen Graf & Carlo Mattogno, *Treblinka. Extermination Camp or Transit Camp?*, op.cit., p. 137.
- ²⁷ At the Eichmann trial, Session 66, Eliahu Rosenberg testified that the graves were “built with a slope, in a conical shape”; online: <http://www.nizkor.org/hweb/people/e/eichmann-adolf/transcripts/Sessions/Session-066-07.html>
- ²⁸ Jürgen Graf & Carlo Mattogno, *Treblinka. Extermination Camp or Transit Camp?*, op.cit., p. 138.
- ²⁹ Adalbert Rückerl, *NS-Vernichtungslager im Spiegel deutscher Strafprozesse*, dtv, Frankfurt 1977, p. 205.
- ³⁰ Interview with Chiel Rajchman, December 7, 1988; op.cit., p. 7.
- ³¹ Arad lists more than 400,000 Jews as deported to Treblinka up until October 1942; Y. Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, pp. 392-395.
- ³² J. Graf & C. Mattogno, *Treblinka. Extermination Camp or Transit Camp?*, op.cit., p. 91.
- ³³ Online: <http://www.deathcamps.org/treblinka/pic/bmap12.jpg>
- ³⁴ Cf. Carlo Mattogno, *Belzec in Propaganda, Testimonies, Archeological Research, and History*, Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago 2004, p. 73.
- ³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 85-91; see also C. Mattogno, “Belzec or the Holocaust Controversy of Roberto Muehlenkamp,” online: <https://codoh.com/library/document/belzec-or-the-holocaust-controversy-of-roberto/>
- ³⁶ Testimony of Chil Rajchman in Jerusalem on March 10, 1987; *Demjanjuk Trial Proceedings Transcript*, Vol. 4, T002194-T002195.
- ³⁷ Cf. J. Graf & C. Mattogno, *Treblinka. Extermination Camp or Transit Camp?*, op.cit., pp. 82-89.
- ³⁸ It should be pointed out that in the USHMM interview (p. 8) Rajchman gives this man’s name as “Wait” (phonetic spelling, could possibly be Weitz or Weiss). Wiernik describes the expert as being about 45 years old (A. Donat, *The Death Camp Treblinka*, op.cit., p. 170). Herbert Floß was born on August 25, 1912, which made him 30 years old at the time in question; surviving pictures of him shows a man who hardly could have mistaken for a 45-year-old (cf. <http://www.deathcamps.org/treblinka/perpetrators.html>). The identification of Floß as the “expert” appears to be based on a statement left by Heinrich Matthes, the SS officer in charge of Camp 2 (cf. Y. Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, op.cit., p. 174).
- ³⁹ Yitzhak Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, op.cit., p. 173
- ⁴⁰ Quoted in *Polish Charges against German War Criminals, Submitted to the United Nations War Crimes Commission* by Dr. Marian Muszkat, The Polish Main National Office for the Investigation of German War Crimes in Poland, Warsaw 1948, p. 194.
- ⁴¹ Testimony of Chil Rajchman in Jerusalem on March 10, 1987; *Demjanjuk Trial Proceedings Transcript*, Vol. 4, T002153f.
- ⁴² Interview with Chiel Rajchman, December 7, 1988; op.cit., p. 8.
- ⁴³ A. Rückerl, *NS-Vernichtungslager*, op.cit., p. 205.
- ⁴⁴ Alexander Donat (ed.), *The Death Camp Treblinka*, op.cit., p. 170f. In J. Graf & C. Mattogno, *Treblinka. Extermination Camp or Transit Camp?*, op.cit., p. 147, we read that “the particulars given here are clearly the fruit of a later insertion.”

The authors then point to the fact that the dimensions of the grate are not present in the 1944 American translation of Wiernik's booklet. This assumption is incorrect however. In the original Polish edition the dimensions are also given: "Na filarach betonowych 100-150 m. długości układano ruszt z szyn kolejowych"; J. Wiernik, *Rok w Treblince*, Nakładem komisji koordynacyjnej, Warsaw 1944, p. 13.

- ⁴⁵ Z. Łukaszewicz, *Obóz straceń w Treblince*, op.cit., p. 31.
- ⁴⁶ Mary Sedor, "Weak, injured shot at roll call, survivor says," *Chronicle Telegram* (Elyria, Ohio), Wednesday, March 11, 1987.
- ⁴⁷ A. Donat (ed.), *The Death Camp Treblinka*, op.cit., p. 171.
- ⁴⁸ Cf. J. Graf & C. Mattogno, *Treblinka. Extermination Camp or Transit Camp?*, op.cit., Document 5 on p. 319 and Document 12 on p. 326.
- ⁴⁹ For a detailed analysis of this issue, see C. Mattogno, "Bełżec or the Holocaust Controversy of Roberto Muehlenkamp," op.cit., Section 4.2. "Wood Requirements."
- ⁵⁰ Testimony of Chil Rajchman in Jerusalem on March 10, 1987; *Demjanjuk Trial Proceedings Transcript*, Vol. 4, T002177.
- ⁵¹ Paul Watkiss and Alison Smith, AEA Technology Environment, *CBA of Foot and Mouth Disease Control Strategies: Environmental Impacts*, http://www.archive.defra.gov.uk/foodfarm/farmanimal/diseases/atoz/fmd/documents/environmental_report.pdf. See also J. Graf & C. Mattogno, *Treblinka. Extermination Camp or Transit Camp?*, op. cit., pp. 148-149.
- ⁵² Claude Lanzmann, *Shoah*, Da Capo Press, New York 1995, p. 10.
- ⁵³ J. Graf & C. Mattogno, *Treblinka. Extermination Camp or Transit Camp?*, op. cit., p. 148.
- ⁵⁴ For a detailed discussion of this subject, see J. Graf & C. Mattogno, *Treblinka. Extermination Camp or Transit Camp?*, op. cit., p. 149; C. Mattogno, "Bełżec or the Holocaust Controversy of Roberto Muehlenkamp," op. cit., Section 4.2.
- ⁵⁵ Thomas Kues, "Tree-felling at Treblinka," online: <https://codoh.com/library/document/tree-felling-at-treblinka/>
- ⁵⁶ C. Mattogno, "Bełżec or the Holocaust Controversy of Roberto Muehlenkamp," op. cit., Section 4.2.
- ⁵⁷ J. Graf & C. Mattogno, *Treblinka. Extermination Camp or Transit Camp?*, op. cit., p. 148.
- ⁵⁸ A. Marcantonio, *I legnami. Gestioni forestali e gestioni mercantili*, Milano, 1939, p. 33 (quoted in Silvana Bartoletto, "The energy transition in Naples during the last two centuries," p. 4, online: <http://latts.in2p3.fr/site/tele/rep1/Bartoletto.pdf>).
- ⁵⁹ Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews*, Yale University Press, New Haven / London 2003, p. 1320.
- ⁶⁰ In the Swedish translation (which was made directly from Yiddish) the relevant passage reads: "At the very most around one-thousand corpses were burned daily. But the murderers were not satisfied with this low number"; Chil Rajchman, *Jag är den siste juden*, Norstedts, Stockholm 2010, p. 88. If this translation is correct, then the cremations would have lasted until early or mid-September instead.

- 61 Cf. http://www.holocaustdenialontrial.com/en/trial/defense/browning/550#browning_553p64n157
- 62 Several other SS men stationed in Treblinka at the time also appear in the promotion list, e.g. Kurt Franz, Willy Mätzig, Gustav Münzberger, Arthur Dachsel, Kurt Seidel and Willy Großmann.
- 63 Y. Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, *op. cit.*, pp. 173-174.
- 64 A. Donat (ed.), *The Death Camp Treblinka*, *op. cit.*, pp. 180-181.
- 65 Arad states that the dentists, whose number he gives as “twenty to thirty” also “examined the bodies, especially those of the dead women, for valuables hidden in the body orifices”; Y. Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, *op. cit.*, p. 112.
- 66 Michael Tsokos (ed.), *Forensic Pathology Reviews*, Vol. 3, Humana Press, New Jersey 2005, p. 199.
- 67 *Ibid.*, p. 202.
- 68 *Ibid.*, p. 203.
- 69 Online: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ogmBWA9Y7Bk>
- 70 Online: <http://www.nizkor.org/hweb/people/e/eichmann-adolf/transcripts/Sessions/Session-066-09.html>
- 71 Y. Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, *op. cit.*, p. 395 (Ostrowiec was located in Opatów county).
- 72 Interview with Chiel Rajchman, December 7, 1988; *op. cit.*, p. 6.
- 73 Criminal Case No. 373/86, State of Israel vs. Ivan (John) Demjanjuk, Verdict, p. 186; quoted in J. Graf & C. Mattogno, *Treblinka. Extermination Camp or Transit Camp?*, *op. cit.*, p. 171.
- 74 Interview with Chiel Rajchman, December 7, 1988; *op. cit.*, p. 6.
- 75 Patrick Buchanan, “Coming Death of John Demjanjuk,” *The New York Post*, March 17, 1990, p. 26.
- 76 Mary Sedor, “Weak, Injured Shot at Roll Call, Survivor Says,” *op. cit.*
- 77 Interview with Chiel Rajchman, December 7, 1988; *op. cit.*, p. 7.
- 78 Testimony of Chil Rajchman in Jerusalem on March 11, 1987; *Demjanjuk Trial Proceedings Transcript*, T002340. See also “Two Treblinka survivors identify ‘Iwan’ photos,” *Chronicle-Telegram* (Elyria, Ohio), February 19, 1981, p. C 1.
- 79 Cf. J. Graf & C. Mattogno, *Treblinka. Extermination Camp or Transit Camp?*, *op. cit.*, pp. 169-175.
- 80 Testimony of Chil Rajchman in Jerusalem on March 10, 1987; *Demjanjuk Trial Proceedings Transcript*, Vol. 4, T002156
- 81 Interview with Chiel Rajchman, December 7, 1988; *op. cit.*, p. 9.
- 82 Cf. Israel Cymlich & Oskar Strawczynski, *Escaping Hell in Treblinka*, Yad Vashem, New York/Jerusalem 2007, pp. 31-32, note 8.
- 83 A. Donat (ed.), *The Death Camp Treblinka*, *op. cit.*, p. 38.
- 84 Cf. T. Kues, “Tree-Felling at Treblinka,” *op. cit.*
- 85 Cf. J. Graf & C. Mattogno, *Treblinka. Extermination Camp or Transit Camp?*, *op. cit.*, pp. 77-90.
- 86 That it took approximately 3 days to travel from Poland to Ukraine by train at this time is confirmed by the personal notes of Swedish military attaché Curt Juhlin-Dannerfelt, who in the summer of 1942 traveled by train from Berlin to Crimea. On July 23 his train departed from Warsaw, where it had made a brief stop, and on July 25 it passed by Dnipropetrovsk in the Ukraine. The train trav-

eled at a speed of only 20 to 40 km per hour, likely due to poor track conditions. Staffan Thorsell, *I hans majestäts tjänst. En berättelse från Hitlers Berlin och Stalins Moskva*, Albert Bonniers Förlag, Stockholm 2009, pp. 149-150. In a German decree addressed to the Jewish Council in the Warsaw Ghetto and dating from July 22, 1942 – the day before Treblinka II was put into operation – it is stated that each Jewish deportee should bring along “a food supply for 3 days”; J. Graf & C. Mattogno, *Treblinka. Extermination Camp or Transit Camp?*, *op. cit.*, pp. 277-278. In the English edition of this book (but not in the original German) the date of this document is erroneously given as July 22, 1943.

“The Truth about the Gas Chambers”?

Historical Considerations Relating to Shlomo Venezia’s “Unique Testimony”

Carlo Mattogno

1. A Long-after-the-Fact Witness

Shlomo Venezia, self-proclaimed ex-conscript of the so-called “*Sonderkommando*” of Birkenau, only decided to “speak out” in 1992. I discussed his testimony in 2002, in an article entitled “Another Last-Minute Witness: Shlomo Venezia.”¹ Few sources were available at the time. Venezia acquired a certain notoriety in 1995 thanks to an interview conducted by Fabio Iacomini, entitled “The Eyewitness Testimony of Salomone Venezia, Survivor of the Sonderkommando”;² his “Testimony at Santa Melania, 18 January 2001, the First Day of Memory” appeared six years later.³ In January 2002, Venezia agreed to an interview with Stefano Lorenzetto,⁴ republished, with a few minor changes, in the weekly magazine *Gente* in October 2002, under the title “I, a Jew, Cremated the Jews.”⁵

In my article mentioned above, I noted:⁶

“Shlomo Venezia, self-proclaimed conscript of the so-called ‘Sonderkommando’ of the Birkenau crematoria, remained, like Elisa Springer, silent for almost fifty years, but, in contrast to Springer, has not (yet) written his ‘memoirs.’”

As I anticipated, in 2007, Venezia finally filled the void, committing his memoirs to a book: *Sonderkommando Auschwitz. The Truth about the Gas Chambers. A Unique Testimony*,⁷ which I shall examine from a historical point of view, including from the point of view of his prior statements.

2. The Reasons for the Silence

Before analyzing Venezia’s statements, it might be informative to examine the reasons that induced Venezia to keep silent “until 1992, 47 years after the Liberation”!⁸ Venezia himself has explained the matter this way:⁹

“For all these years, we have not spoken out, not even with my friend, although he knew that his father worked where I was, and was killed. We lacked the courage to discuss these matters. But at a certain point, faced with certain facts, we decided that it was necessary. It was some

years ago, when the star of David was painted on a few shops in Rome, words like 'Juden raus', 'Ebrei ai forni' [Jews to the ovens] appeared on a few walls, and Nazi skinheads began to be seen here and there. Some people might think they are just boys' pranks, something not very important, but for us who have experienced these things, seeing the re-appearance of such things is unacceptable. This was what compelled me to begin [...]."

In the book, Venezia wrote:

*"I started to tell the story of what I had seen and experienced at Birkenau a very long time afterwards, not because I didn't want to speak of these things, but because of the fact that people did not wish to listen; they didn't want to believe us. When I got out of the hospital, I found myself with a Jew and I began to speak. All at once, I realized that, instead of looking at me, someone behind me was looking and making signs. I turned around and saw one of his friends who told him by means of gestures that I was completely crazy. From that moment I no longer wished to speak. Talking about it made me suffer and when I found myself faced with somebody who didn't believe me, I thought it was useless. Only in 1992, forty-seven years after my liberation, did I begin to speak about it. The problem of anti-Semitism began to appear in Italy and swastikas were always to be seen on walls [...]. In December 1992 I returned to Auschwitz for the first time. [...] Today, when I feel well, I feel the need to testify, but it is difficult. I am a very exact person, who loves things done well. When I go to speak in a school and the teacher has not sufficiently prepared his students, it wounds me deeply. Overall, however, testifying in schools gives me great satisfaction."*¹⁰

In another interview, after talking about anti-Semitic graffiti on walls in Rome, he stated:¹¹

"Then I felt that my duty was to tell the story of the Holocaust as I saw it with my own eyes."

These motivations are not very convincing. In particular, they do not explain why Venezia's close relatives, his brother Maurice and his cousin Dario, his companions in misfortune from the "Sonderkommando," also kept silent, just the way he did. But above all, they appear inadequate in view of the "duty to testify," which should be legal and historical, in addition to ethical. Venezia, in fact, inexplicably, has never made any official declaration, never made a sworn statement, never participated in any trial against his persecutors: not at the Eichmann Trial in Jerusalem (April

1961-May 1962), nor the Auschwitz Trial in Frankfurt (December 1963-August 1965), nor at the Auschwitz Trial in Vienna, against F. Ertl and W. Dejaco (January-March 1972); he has never contributed to the condemnation of his jailers, nor has he enlightened historians on the presumed process of extermination at Auschwitz. Why not? Just because a few know-it-alls might have thought he was crazy?

Venezia's other cousin, Yakob Gabbai, by contrast, spoke out. At the beginning of the 1990s, he granted an interview to the Israeli historian Gideon Greif, who published it in 1995.¹² Greif also interviewed three other of Venezia's self-proclaimed companions in misfortune, who mentioned him explicitly: Josef Sackar, registered at Auschwitz under number 182739,¹³ Shaul Chasan, 182527¹⁴ and Léon Cohen, 182492,¹⁵ both of them, explicitly mentioned, in turn, by Venezia.¹⁶ The comparison between these testimonies and Venezia's, as we shall see, is very instructive.

3. The Deportation to Auschwitz

Venezia, born in Salonica (Greece) in 1923, was apprehended in Athens on 25 March 1944 and later deported to Birkenau, which he reached in April. It is curious that, in her book *Libro della memoria (Book of Memory)*, Liliانا Picciotto Fargion lists, among the deported Italian Jews, three persons born at Salonica with the last name Venezia, but not Shlomo,¹⁷ perhaps because he was an Italian citizen.¹⁸

The witness was registered at Birkenau under number 182727. On 11 April 1944 there arrived at Auschwitz from Greece a transport of 2,500 Jews, of whom 320 men (182440-182759) and 328 women (76856-77183) were registered.¹⁹

In his book, he mentions the exact number of inmates registered,²⁰ which he could not have known at the time. It is therefore clear that this information is taken from the Auschwitz *Kalendarium*.

Venezia's cousin, Y. Gabbai, of whom he speaks repeatedly, reached Auschwitz in the same transport and was registered under number 182569,²¹ but, according to him, 700 men were selected upon arrival.²² He & was obviously not familiar with D. Czech's *Kalendarium*.

Venezia tells as follows what happened upon his arrival at the camp:²³

"Instead, the group containing myself, my brother and my cousins was then sent on foot to Auschwitz I."

But the cousin, Y. Gabbai, described the same event quite differently:²⁵

“700 men were selected from the transport, among them my brother and myself. We then had to walk three kilometers on foot^[24] to Birkenau.”

Venezia was furthermore tattooed with the 182727 on the same day as his arrival,²⁶ while his cousin, Y. Gabbai, by contrast, was, inexplicably, tattooed with the preceding number 182569 “a few days afterwards.”²⁷

With respect to Auschwitz camp, Venezia states:²⁸

“Inside the camp, immediately to the left, was Block 24: it was the brothel for soldiers and a few privileged non-Jews.”

This brothel was, on the contrary, intended exclusively for inmates. A report of the *Lagerarzt* (camp physician) of Auschwitz Concentration Camp dated 16 December 1943 states in this regard:

“In October, a brothel with 19 women was created in Block 24. Prior to their employment, the women were tested for Wa. R.^[29] and Go.^[30] These tests were repeated at regular intervals. The inmates are permitted access to the brothel every evening, after roll-call. An inmate physician always had to be present during visiting hours [to the brothel], as well as an inmate nurse, to carry out the sanitary measures ordered. The supervision was conducted by an SS physician and an SS nurse”

German original:³¹

“Im Oktober wurde im Block 24 ein Bordell mit 19 Frauen errichtet. Vor ihrem Einsetzen wurden die Frauen auf Wa. R. und auf Go. untersucht. Diese Untersuchungen werden in regelmässigen Abständen wiederholt. Der Zutritt ins Bordell ist den Häftlingen allabendlich, nach dem Appell gestatten. Während der Besuchzeit ist immer ein Häftlingsarzt und Häftlingspfleger anwesend, die die angeordneten sanitären Massnahmen durchführen. Die Überwachung besorgt ein SS-Artz und ein S.D.G.”

4. The BIIa Quarantine Camp

The next day Venezia was sent to Birkenau BIIa camp, where they had to remain in quarantine for forty days. He states that, a few days afterwards:³²

“They made us take a cart, like those utilized for transporting hay. Then we had to drag it in place of the horses. We reached a barracks located at the end of the quarantine [area], the so-called Leichenkeller, or morgue.

When we opened the door, an atrocious odor took us by the throat: the stench of decomposing bodies. I had never passed by in front of that barracks before, and only then did I learn that it was used as a storage area for the bodies of inmates who had died during quarantine, before they were taken to the crematorium to be burnt. A little group of prisoners spent the entire morning in the barracks recovering the bodies of those who had died during the night. The bodies could then remain 15 or 20 days in the Leichenkeller to rot, and those on the bottom were often in an advanced state of decomposition, due to the heat."

In reality, there was no morgue in the BIIa quarantine camp. In the 19 barracks making up the camp, 14 were used to lodge the inmates, 3 contained lavatories and latrines, one contained an infirmary and one the kitchen. In April-May 1944, 12 barracks were assigned to the inmate hospital; no barracks was used as a morgue.³³

The languishing of bodies in the morgues of Birkenau for "15 or 20 days" has no basis in reality, which renders Venezia's tale unsustainable from that point onwards.

On 4 August 1943, *SS-Sturmbannführer* Karl Bischoff, head of the *Zentralbauleitung*, replied to *SS-Hauptsturmführer* Eduard Wirths, Auschwitz garrison physician, who had requested the construction of masonry morgues:

"SS-Standartenführer Dr. Mrugowski, over the course of the conversation on 31 July, declared that the bodies had to be carried into the morgues of the crematoria twice a day, in the morning and evening, to be exact. The separate construction of morgues in the individual subsections is therefore rendered superfluous."

German original:³⁴

"SS-Standartenführer Mrugowski hat bei der Besprechung am 31.7 erklärt, daß die Leichen zweimal am Tage, und zwar morgens und abends in die Leichenkammern der Krematorien überführt werden sollen, wodurch sich die separate Erstellung von Leichenkammern in den einzelnen Unterabschnitten erübrigt"

On 25 May 1944, Dr. Wirths sent a letter to Auschwitz camp commandant, in which he stated:

"In the inmate infirmaries of Auschwitz II concentration camp, there are naturally a certain number of bodies every day, the transport of which to the crematoria is routine, and occurs twice a day, morning and evening."

German original:³⁵

“In den Häftlingsrevieren der Lager des KL Auschwitz II fallen naturgemäß täglich eine bestimmte Anzahl von Leichen an, deren Abtransport zu den Krematorien zwar eingeteilt ist und täglich 2 mal, morgens und abends, erfolgt.”

The transport of the bodies to the crematoria “morning and evening” explains why the “*Sonderkommando*” was subdivided into two working shifts, day and night, as also declared by Venezia:

*“We worked shifts from 8 in the morning until 8 at night, or from 8 at night until 8 in the morning”;*³⁶

*“we worked in two shifts, a day shift and a night shift.”*³⁷

As regards the term for the alleged barracks-morgue, Venezia confuses the term for the barracks with the term for the semi-underground morgue in Crematorium II/III: “*Leichenkeller*,” literally translated, means “corpse cellar”; all the other morgues at Birkenau were in fact on ground level. As we will see, Venezia states that he was assigned to the so-called “*Sonderkommando*” of Crematorium III, but, rather curiously, he never mentions the term “*Leichenkeller*” precisely where he should mention it: “*Leichenkeller 1*” was in fact the alleged homicidal gas chamber.

Where erroneous terminology is concerned, Venezia, repeating what he had already stated in 1995,³⁸ states that the inmates, at Auschwitz, were called “pieces” or “parts” (e.g., of a machine or assembly) (*Stücke*).³⁹

No known document attests to this linguistic usage. On the other contrary, in thousands of documents, the inmates are called, precisely, “prisoners” (*Häftlinge*); they are sometimes indicated by their registration number only, and sometimes with their name as well.⁴⁰ No other witness from “*Sonderkommando*” and none of Venezia’s companions in misfortune confirms the alleged term of “*Stücke*.” Venezia’s cousin Y. Gabai stated: “There were no names in the camp, only numbers.”⁴¹

Venezia continues his narrative as follows:⁴²

“At the end of the third week of quarantine, German officials arrived. They did not normally come near, since the maintenance of order was entrusted to the Kapos. The officials stopped in front of our barracks and ordered the Kapos to form a line, as if for roll call. Every one of us had to declare our occupation and we knew to lie. When my turn came, I claimed I was a barber, while Léon Cohen, a Greek friend who was always with us, said he was a dentist, although in real life he worked in a bank. He thought that they would put him in a dental clinic to do the cleaning, at least it would have been warm. For myself, I was convinced

that this would permit me to join the prisoners who worked in the Zentralsauna. I had seen that the work was not too difficult and they were in the warmth. In reality, it didn't happen the way I imagined. The German chose eighty persons, including me, my brother and my cousins."

But in his interview with Stefano Lorenzetto the number of men selected is given as 70.⁴³

The following is Y. Gabbai's account of the same episode:⁴⁴

"After twenty days – therefore on 12 May 1944 – there was another selection, stricter than the first: two physicians came with two non-commissioned officers. We had to parade naked. A German physician examined us, without saying a word, and chose 300 of the strongest and healthiest."

In this regard, J. Sackar writes as follows:⁴⁵

"From there, they took us to quarantine: Abschnitt BIIa. There we remained three weeks. [...] One evening, when the first transports arrived from Hungary, they conducted another selection and 200-220 Greeks were taken from our transport to special blocks, if I am not mistaken, nos. 11 and 13."

The first transports of Hungarian Jews arrived at Auschwitz on 17 May 1944.⁴⁶

S. Chasan recounts:⁴⁷

"We remained two weeks in 'quarantine'. [...] The Germans simply came to the 'quarantine' and took 200 strong men for the work."

Finally, L. Cohen declares:⁴⁸

"We remained one month in quarantine. One day, a Jewish physician and a German came to the block for the 'visit'. Since I knew German, my companions asked me to translate for them. I went over to the physicians and told them that they shouldn't have assigned us to the Sonderkommando. Some days later, a young German arrived, about thirty years old, who spoke French. [...] He then told me that he needed 200 strong men at the railway. [...] The man returned the following morning and said: 'All the Greeks with me!' There were about 150 persons."

From the "*Quarantäne Liste*" (Quarantine List), it appears that on 13 April 1944, 320 Jews from Athens were received in camp BIIa with the registration number 182440-182759 and were lodged in Block 12; the quarantine expired on 11 May, but 30 prisoners were transferred on 5 May,⁴⁹ therefore Venezia – who remained only three weeks in quarantine – had to form part

of this group; even though he mentions the figure of 70 or 80 prisoners, only 30 prisoners were transferred.

With reference to the barracks of the “*Sonderkommando*,” he adds:⁵⁰

“At any rate, not many of us remained; over the course of a week we were transferred to the dormitory of the Crematorium.”

This would therefore have happened around the middle of May 1944. But according Filip Müller, another self-proclaimed member of the “*Sonderkommando*,” this occurred “at the end of June” (“*Ende Juni*”).⁵¹

5. The First Day in the *Sonderkommando*

Venezia, with the 30 or 70 or 80 or 150 or 200-220 or 300 pre-selected men, was taken into camp BIIId “towards two barracks which although they were inside the camp, were isolated from all the others by barbed wire” in which the so-called *Sonderkommando* was located.⁵²

“The afternoon afterwards towards seven in the morning, they took us to Crematorium III, which was surrounded by a grid of barbed wire with the current at six thousand volts. Behind the grid there ran a picket fence three meters high. From outside, we could not see anything of what was happening inside, we saw only the top of the chimney. Hardly had we entered when the Kapo, so as to avoid confronting us with reality suddenly, told us to remain outside in the courtyard to pull up weeds and other work of this kind. At a certain point I noticed that the building had a window as high as a man, and impelled by curiosity, I decided to see what was going on in that crematorium. I approached the window and saw a room full of dead people, so tangled up that at first I could not understand, not like those we had seen in the barracks,⁵³ but recently dead, not yet decomposed. We couldn’t believe it.”⁵⁴

The next day was 6 May 1944. At the time, Crematorium III (like Crematorium II) was not surrounded by any “picket fence three meters high” which would have cut off the view of the respective courtyards, as shown in particular by photograph no. 153 in the Auschwitz Album, taken on 26 May 1944, which shows that the eastern half and a good part of the courtyard of Crematorium III were clearly visible because it was surrounded only by a barbed-wire fence.⁵⁵ This photograph also appears in Venezia’s book, with a misleading caption: “Group of women and children – Hungarian Jews – about to enter Crematorium II.”⁵⁶ The photographs in the Auschwitz Album taken later show in fact that this group of persons travelled up the *Hauptstrasse* (Main Street) bypassing Crematoria II and III,

and through the *Ringstrasse* (ring road),⁵⁷ ending up in the little forest near the small lake located east of Crematorium IV.⁵⁸

The story of the picket fence is taken from F. Müller's book, which says:⁵⁹

"Beforehand, Moll had caused a barrier to be constructed here [near the Bunker] and in the courtyard of Crematoria IV and V, about 3 meters high, consisting of long stakes fixed in the ground, sticks and dry branches, to prevent those outside from casting indiscreet glances into the extermination areas."

Venezia obviously did not fully adhere to this passage, since he attributes to Crematorium II or III that which F. Müller reports about the "Bunker" and Crematoria IV and V.

Standing in the courtyard of the crematorium, Venezia noted "that the building had one window at the height of a man." Recounted this way, the story is rather ingenuous, since along the entire outside perimeter of the crematorium there were no fewer than 47 windows the height of a man.⁶⁰ There were 47 windows to choose from! In the book, Venezia returns to the episode, writing:⁶¹

"The first day at the Crematorium, we remained in the courtyard without entering the building. In those days, they called it Crematorium I; they did not yet know of the existence of the first Crematorium at Auschwitz I. Three steps led to the interior, but instead of making us enter, the Kapo made us walk around it. One man from the Sonderkommando came to tell us what we were supposed to do: cut the weeds and clean the grounds a little. This was not useful work; the Germans probably wanted to keep us under observation before making us work inside the Crematorium. When we returned the next day, they made us do the same things. Although they had strictly prohibited it, impelled by curiosity I approached the building to see what was going on from the window. When I got close enough to have a look, I was paralyzed: on the other side of the window I saw piles of corpses, all on top of each other, bodies of persons who were still young. I returned to my companions and told them what I had seen. They then went to look for themselves, carefully, without being noticed by the Kapo. They returned with their faces contorted, incredulous. They did not dare to think what could have happened. I only understood later that those bodies were the 'back-up' from a preceding convoy. They had not been burned before the arrival of the new convoy, and they had placed them there to make room in the gas chamber."

I note first of all that, in this version, the scene takes place at Crematorium II instead of Crematorium III. Venezia has furthermore abandoned the unsustainable story of the “picket fence three meters high.” I add that the windows of the crematorium were double windows, and were all protected by an iron grid, non-negligible details which could not escape an outside observer.

According to another self-proclaimed member of the *Sonderkommando*, Henryk Tauber, on the ground floor of Crematorium II and the area designated “*Waschraum und Aufbahrungsraum*” (washroom and laying-out room), towards which the freight elevator travelled, came to be used in March-April 1943 as a “morgue.”⁶²

But even if one wished to extend this function to Crematorium III and in May 1944, it nevertheless extraordinarily remains the case that Venezia, among the 22 windows which opened into that facade of the crematorium, claims to have gone to have a look precisely through the pair of windows of the room in question.

For F. Müller, this area was used for the execution.⁶³ Of this presumed use, however, Venezia knows nothing: for him the executions with a bullet in the neck were performed in the oven rooms, near the “corner of the last oven,”⁶⁴ nor did he mention the use of an area on the ground floor for the storage of a “back-up” of bodies.

The story of the “back-up from a preceding convoy” is furthermore disproved by the *Kalendarium* of Auschwitz, according to which the last gassing before 6 May 1944 was performed on 2 May, but the presumed 2,698 victims,⁶⁵ based on the cremation capacity described by Venezia,⁶⁶ would have been cremated in less than two days; on the other hand, the first gassing subsequent to that date is said to have occurred on 13 May.⁶⁷ In the book, “the morning after” became “a few days after our arrival,”⁶⁸ but this did not change the conclusion which flows from his account: Venezia in Crematorium II or III could not have seen the group of bodies of presumed gassing victims.

Venezia’s cousin described the event as follows:⁷⁰

“At the beginning of the week, on Monday 15 May, the group was divided. Some went to the Crematorium II [= III], we were taken to Crematorium I [= II]. In our group there were primarily Greek Jews, among them Michel Ardeti, Josef Baruch from Corfu, the Cohen brothers, Shlomo and Maurice Venezia, myself and my brother Dario Gabai, Leon Cohen, Marcel Nagari and Daniel ben Nachmias. They told us that the first night we were not supposed to work, only observe. I recall that towards 5:30 in the afternoon, a transport arrived from Hunga-

ry.^[69] *The old workers said that we new arrivals had to watch carefully, since within a few minutes they [the deportees] would no longer be alive. We did not believe it. After a little while they order us to follow the workers downstairs, to see what was happening down there. This was now our work, we were told. Outside, there was [written] 'Shower,' in Polish, German, Russian and English.*

[Question] *What did you see when, for the first time, the door of the gas chamber opened before you?*

[Gabbai] *I saw bodies, one on top of the other. There were about 2,500 bodies."*

For J. Sackar, S. Chasan and L. Cohen, by contrast, on the first work day, the new detainees of the *Sonderkommando* were taken directly to the "Bunker," as we will see in paragraph 8.

6. "Bunker 2"

In the interview published by *Il Giornale*, Venezia described his first workday in the so-called *Sonderkommando* without mentioning at all the anecdote relating to the crematorium:⁷¹

"The next day [6 May 1944] they made us walk through a little forest. We arrived in front of a little peasant cottage. Woe to anybody who moved or said a word. We all stopped in a corner to wait. Suddenly we heard voices in the distance: there were entire families, with little children and grandparents. They forced them to take their clothes off in a hurry. Then they made them enter the little cottage. A truck arrived with the insignia of the Red Cross: an SS man got out, [and] using a device, opened a little window and allowed a can of stuff, about two kilos, to fall inside. He closed it and went away. Ten minutes afterwards, a door opened from the part facing the entranceway. The chief called to us to drag out the bodies. We had to throw them into the fire in a sort of swimming pool 15 meters away."

This narration refers to the so-called "Bunker 2," a farmhouse outside Birkenau camp, supposedly transformed into a homicidal gas chamber in 1942. In reality, this presumed extermination installation, as I have shown in a specific study,⁷² never existed. It never appears in any German document, either under the name "Bunker" or under any other name, not even a "code name."

The Soviet commission of inquiry, which conducted its activity at Auschwitz in February-March 1945, was completely ignorant of the term

“Bunker”: it always used the expression “gas chamber” (газовая камера, *gazovaja kamera*) Numbers 1 and 2. The witness par excellence, Szlama Dragon, in the first deposition rendered before a Soviet examining magistrate on 26 February 1945, also spoke of “gazokamera [газокамера] Numbers 1 and 2” and explicitly stated that this was the official designation. H. Tauber, in his deposition dated 27 and 28 February 1945, referred only to “gas chambers” (“газовые камеры,” *gazovie kameri*). The term “Bunker” appeared for the first time in the deposition of Stanisław Jankowski (also a self-proclaimed member of the *Sonderkommando*) dated 16 April 1945.⁷³

Venezia was not aware that, according to the official version, this “Bunker” was put back in operation on the arrival at Auschwitz of the Hungarian Jews (since the “gas chambers” of the crematoria were unable to dispose of the victims), therefore not before 17 May 1944. The same thing is true of the presumed cremation “swimming pool.” D. Czech states in fact that Rudolf Höss, the commandant at Auschwitz, in the course of preparations for the extermination of the Hungarian Jews, ordered the reactivation of “Bunker 2” on 9 May 1944.⁷⁴ F. Müller writes in this regard that “camp commandant Höss first appeared in the vicinity of the crematoria at the beginning of May; a few days later, *Hauptscharführer* Moll arrived,”⁷⁵ who ordered the excavation of “five ditches behind Crematorium V.” F. Müller adds:⁷⁶

“Every day, in the vicinity of Bunker V, a very large number of prisoners also arrived to dig ditches.”

The period is precisely that of the presumed sending of Venezia to “Bunker 2”: at the time, therefore, he, possibly would have been present only at the digging of the ditches, but not at the spectacle of burning pits. Moreover, as I have already noted, at that time not even one transport of Jews arrived who could have been gassed.

Venezia was also unaware that the supposed “Bunker 2,” according to Sz. Dragon, was sub-divided into four areas, and had 4 exits and entrances, as well as 5 Zyklon B introduction ports. For D. Paisikovic, on the other hand, it had 3 areas,⁷⁷ while based on the topographical survey of Auschwitz Museum dated 29 July 1985, it had 7 areas.⁷⁸

On the other hand, the expression “take our clothes off in the cold”⁷⁹ not only does not suit the period (6 May), but is also in conflict with the official version, according to which at “Bunker 2” three barracks were built in which the victims undressed.

I would like to open a parenthesis here. The historian Marcello Pezzetti, in his essay “La Shoah, Auschwitz e il Sonderkommando” included in *Ve-*

nezia's book, instead of indicating this error, attempts to cover it up, by stating:⁸⁰

"In this period of maximum camp extermination capacity, the Nazi authorities reactivated Bunker 2 (without undressing barracks) next door, the inside of which was divided into two parts [...]."

But the witness F. Müller, who is certainly a bit more credible than Venezia, has written in this regard that "the undressing rooms in which the victims were supposed to take off their clothes before being gassed were located in three wooden barracks."⁸¹ Sz. Dragon has also confirmed that, upon the reactivation of "Bunker 2," "three other barracks were built."⁸²

Pezzetti is proven wrong even by the diagram of Birkenau reproduced in the book, in which "Bunker 2" (designated "M 2") appears equipped with two undressing barracks!⁸³

Returning to the statements of Venezia, the gas-tight windows in the disinfection chambers (and supposed homicidal gas chambers) did not open "with a device," but with a simple butterfly wrench. The witness confuses the opening system of the windows with that of the cans of Zyklon B, which, specifically, were opened with a special device, which was called a "*Schlageisen*" (chisel).

Furthermore, it is not clear how Venezia could have established that "approximately two kilos" of Zyklon B had been introduced in the "cottage," because this was packaged in cans of various sizes, from 100 to 1,500 grams of hydrocyanic acid, which he nevertheless never describes.

In the book, Venezia recounts the same anecdote in a more prolix manner. I will cite the essential passages:⁸⁴

"We arrived before a cottage which was called, as I learned later, Bunker 2 or 'the white house,' and precisely at that time the murmur became more intense.

Bunker 2 was a small farmhouse with the roof covered with leafy branches. They ordered us to stand over to one side of the house, near the road which passed by in front of it, from where we couldn't see anything, neither to the right or left."

Two pages later the book reproduces a drawing by the self-proclaimed member of the *Sonderkommando* David Olère, dating back to 1945, showing "Bunker 2."⁸⁵ The drawing shows a house (the presumed "Bunker 2") with a door in the centre of the facade, a little window in the centre of the visible side of the building and a roof apparently covered with leafy branches. In reality, according to the deposition of Sz. Dragon dated 10-11

May 1945,⁸⁶ the roof was of straw,⁸⁷ as confirmed on 10 August 1964 by D. Paisikovic.⁸⁸

I would like to add that the drawing by Sz. Dragon of “Bunker 2”⁸⁹ is in flagrant contradiction to that by D. Olère, which moreover presents several elements of fantasy,⁹⁰ while that of D. Paisikovic is in conflict with both.⁹¹ Therefore the detail of “roof covered with leafy branches” is the product of a misunderstanding of the drawing by D. Olère.

Venezia then says that 200-300 victims arrived: “The persons were compelled to undress in front of the door.” No mention of the purpose-built undressing barracks, not even here.

Later in the narrative, there appears both the mention of the SS which “with a device opened a little window,” and the reference to “approximately 2 kilos” of Zyklon B.

Venezia adds:⁹²

“As for us, they ordered us to go behind the house, where I had noticed a strange glow upon my arrival. While we were approaching, I noticed that this glow was the glare of the fire which was burning in the pits, about twenty meters away.”

He had previously mentioned only one pit, “a sort of swimming pool,” or “a pit like a swimming pool”:⁹³ here, by contrast, he speaks of “pits,” in the plural, without even bothering to tell us how many there were. This matter is in fact a rather difficult one, since, in this regard, the eyewitnesses contradict each other, claiming that there were 1, 2 or 4 pits, that they were 50 or 30 meters long, 10 or 6 meters wide and 3 or 4 meters deep.⁹⁴

Venezia was also unaware that, in 1944, “Bunker 2” (according to other witnesses) was renamed “Bunker V” (F. Müller) or “Bunker 5” (D. Paisikovic), so that Jean-Claude Pressac made the Solomonic decision to call it “Bunker 2/V.”⁹⁵

7. The First Workday at the “Bunker” According to Venezia’s Companions in Misfortune

In this regard, J. Sackar stated as follows on his first day in the *Sonderkommando*:⁹⁶

“I remember the first day well. We were in Camp D [BIId] and one evening they took us behind the last crematory building [hinter das letzte Krematoriumsgebäude], where I saw the most horrible atrocities of my life. That evening a small transport had arrived. We did not have to work; they had taken us there so that we would get used to looking.

There was an open pit, called 'Bunker,' to cremate the bodies. The bodies were brought from the gas chambers to these 'Bunkers,' where they were thrown in and burned in the fire."

The "last crematorium" was Crematorium V, therefore the witness located "Bunker 2" in the courtyard outside this crematorium!

At the question: "Can you describe the 'Bunker'?", the witness answered:⁹⁷

"Yes, it was a big pit, where the bodies were carried and thrown in. The pits were deep excavations; wood was piled up down on the bottom. The bodies were carried here from the gas chamber and thrown in the pits. The pits were all outside, in the open air. There were a few pits in which the bodies were burned."

For J. Sackar, therefore, "Bunker 2" was not a peasant cottage transformed into a gassing installation, but rather a "big pit" in which the bodies murdered in the chambers of Crematorium V were cremated!

This harebrained artifact of "Holocaustology" appeared in the testimonies of his companions in misfortune.

S. Chasan, in fact, still with reference to the first working day, stated:⁹⁸

"We walked and walked. While we were walking, we wondered: 'Where are we going to work?'. The answer was: 'In the factory'. Finally, we reached a small forest. We looked around in the small forest and what did we see? A small peasant cottage, an isolated cabin. We approached, we reached it and when the door was opened, I saw something horrible. Inside it was full of bodies from a transport, more than 1,000 bodies. The entire building was full of bodies."

This "peasant cottage," therefore, had one single gas chamber with one single door. As I have already noted, this is in contradiction to the statements of Sz. Dragon and D. Paisikovic, both of whom in turn contradict each other.

For S. Chasan as well, the "Bunker" was not the "peasant cottage," but rather a pit:⁹⁹

"We had to pull the bodies out. There was a basin there, a deep pit which was called 'Bunker'."

In response to the interviewer's question: "Where was this basin located?," the witness added:¹⁰⁰

"It was called 'Bunker'. Now, when I returned to Auschwitz, I found neither the pit nor the house. It must have been located behind Crematorium IV [= V]."

Thus, S. Chasan also located “Bunker 2” in the courtyard of crematorium V.

And finally this is the tale of L. Cohen:¹⁰²

“The Germans didn’t take us to the buildings of the crematorium plant, but to the cremation pits. There I saw several carts beside the pits and very close by, a building with a small door. It was then clear to me that they were asphyxiating people with gas. We waited outside for about 15 minutes, then, at the order of the Germans, we had to open the doors. The bodies fell in piles and we began to load them onto the carts. They were little carts like mining carts. Much smaller than railway cars. The bodies were carried to the pits. In the pits, the bodies were arranged this way: one layer of bodies of women and children,^[101] above a layer of wood; then a layer of bodies of men, and so on, until the pit, a good three meters deep, was completely filled. Then the Germans poured gasoline into the pit. The mixture of dead bodies and wood burned furiously.”

Summarizing briefly, for Venezia, the new prisoners of the *Sonderkommando* were first taken to Crematorium II or Crematorium III, where they saw bodies through a window, but were not permitted to enter the gas chamber; Y. Gabai, by contrast, states that on 15 May 1944 they were taken to Crematorium II, where they saw the bodies of 2,500 Hungarian Jews in the gas chamber from a transport having arrived in Birkenau only two days after. The witness says nothing about working at “Bunker 2.” J. Sackar asserts that the prisoners were directed into the courtyard outside crematorium V, where there was a pit which was called “Bunker.” S. Chasan makes similar statements. L. Cohen, by contrast, who was not even aware of the designation “Bunker,” defines the supposed extermination installation simply as a “a building.” He introduces into his narrative “carts” to carry the bodies to the pits, undoubtedly more comfortable than the system described by Venezia:¹⁰³

“Carrying one body between only two people on that muddy terrain, where the feet sank in the mud was not easy, but for one person, it was almost impossible [...].”

S. Chasan, upon his arrival at “Bunker 2,” found it already full of 1,000 bodies. L. Cohen, by contrast, had to wait 15 minutes before seeing the bodies. Venezia, it is hard to see how, succeeded in seeing the living victims as well, who were however not 1,000 but 200-300:¹⁰⁴

“Curious as always, I approached to see what was going on and I saw whole families who were waiting in front of the cabin: young people, women children. Two, three hundred in all.”

Finally, according to J. Sackar, the new members of the *Sonderkommando* did not work at the “Bunker,” but limited themselves to watching, while for Venezia they were compelled to remove the bodies from the gas chamber and throw them into a burning pit; for L. Cohen, by contrast, they had to arrange them in layers in an empty pit.

I conclude this brief panoramic overview with another eyewitness testimony, that of Miklos Nyiszli, self-proclaimed physician in the *Sonderkommando* in the same period in which Venezia was working there. He wrote that “Bunker 2,” never referred to in this manner by Nyiszli, but described as “a long decrepit building with a stubble roof,” “a peasant cottage,” was not a gassing installation, but rather a simple “undressing room” for the Jewish victims, who did not die in a gas chamber, but rather, from a gunshot to the back of the neck on the edge of two enormous “cremation pits.”¹⁰⁵

8. The “Cremation Pits” in the Area of “Bunker 2”

The existence of “cremation pits” in the spring-summer of 1944 in the area of “Bunker 2” is one of the recurrent themes of Auschwitz “memory literature.” L. Cohen—to remain with our eyewitnesses, informs us that “the pit” (*die Grube*) was “a good three meters deep,”¹⁰⁶ while according to S. Chasan “the pit was very deep, I believe about four meters.”¹⁰⁷

But none of the aerial photographs taken by American and British aviation in 1944 show “cremation pits” or smoke in this area.¹⁰⁸

What is more, at the time, the ground-water table in the area of Birkenau was 1.2 meters below ground level,¹⁰⁹ therefore the cremations would have taken place underwater!

A quick reference also to the “cremation pits” of the courtyard of Crematorium V. In confirmation, Venezia’s book reproduces two photographs.

The first shows “men from the *Sonderkommando* near one of the mass graves of Crematorium V.”¹¹⁰ The caption is doubly erroneous. In keeping with the standard terminology of the Holocaust, since smoke appears in the photograph, one should refer to a “cremation pit,” as is commonly done. The related footnote in the book asserts that “at the end of spring 1944,

there were five open-air cremation pits around Crematorium V,”¹¹¹ but this is arbitrary and false.

Arbitrary, because the testimonies of the self-proclaimed ex-members of the “*Sonderkommando*” are contradictory: the supposed pits were 2 for S. Jankowski, 3 for C.S. Bendel, 3 for H. Tauber according to the deposition rendered to the Soviets, 5 according to the deposition rendered by him to J. Sehn and also for Sz. Dragon and F. Müller.¹¹² Every witness, furthermore, attributed conflicting dimensions and capacities to these dimensions.¹¹³

False, because only one single cremation site existed in this area, with a surface area of approximately 50 square meters. This single site appears both in the photograph mentioned above, and in the aerial photograph of Birkenau taken by the British on 23 August 1944, which is precisely the second photograph in the book on the theme of the “cremation pits.”¹¹⁴ The column of smoke which can be seen beside crematorium V originates precisely from this site, as I have demonstrated with enlargements of the available photographs.¹¹⁵

According to F. Müller, the alleged five “cremation pits” in this area should have measured 40-50 meters in size and 8 x 2 meters deep,¹¹⁶ therefore their total surface area should have been an average of 1,800 square meters. The aerial photographs of Birkenau show, by contrast, one single cremation site of approximately 50 square meters. Naturally, the “pits” of F. Müller would also have been full of water for at least 60% of their depth.

9. The Recovery of Human Fat from the “Cremation Pits”

In the interview published in *Il Giornale*, Venezia, incredibly, repeats the absurd story of the recovery of human fat from the “swimming pool”:¹¹⁷

“Yes, but the first night they assigned me to this open air crematorium. There was a sloping drain all around where they recovered the fat dripping from the pyre. I had to pick it up and throw it back onto the bodies to make them burn faster. You have no idea of how combustible human fat really is.”

And in the book he repeats:¹¹⁸

“The pits were sloping; the human fat produced by the burning bodies dripped along the bottom into a corner, it a sort of hollow had been dug to collect it. When the fire threatened to go out, the men took a bit of the



Members of the United States Congress before the crematory ovens of Buchenwald in 1945. Note the central muffle of the first oven with the door open in the left foreground. Source: <http://www.vho.org>

fat from the hollow and poured it onto the bodies to enliven the flame. I saw something of the kind only here, in the pits of Bunker 2."

This story, invented immediately after the war, has received the official sanction of F. Müller, who embroidered it in a very detailed manner. According to him, however, the supposed "cremation pits" were equipped with two little channels 25-30 cm. in width, which, in the centre of the pit, ran sloping along the central axis and flowed out into two deeper little holes in which the liquid human fat was collected, which was picked up in a bucket and thrown onto the bonfire.¹¹⁹

As I have demonstrated in a specific study,¹²⁰ this little story is nonsensical simply because of the fact that, while the ignition temperature of the light hydrocarbons which formed as a result of the gasification of the bodies is approximately 600°C, the ignition temperature of animal fats is 184°C, therefore in such an installation the human fat would burn immediately. Also, because the ignition temperature of seasoned wood is between 325-350°C. Moreover, if—just another of the many miracles interspersed throughout the lives of *Sonderkommando* survivors—the liquid human fat could have been able to drip through the flames on the bottom of the pit, flow over burning branches and flow out into the lateral collection ditches, Venezia, together with F. Müller, would have had to approach and collect it at the edge of a "cremation pit" in which there was an immense bonfire raging away at a minimum temperature of 600°C!

10. The Gas Chamber in Crematorium III

Initially, to Fabio Iacomini, Venezia had claimed to have been assigned to Crematorium III.¹²¹ To Stefano Lorenzetto, by contrast, he said: "I was assigned to Krematorium 2, the largest of the four¹²² functioning at Birkenau."¹²³ In the book, he returns to his first version:¹²⁴

"The truce didn't last long: the next day we had to recommence working and I was assigned to a little group of about forty persons at Crematorium III."

In the plans of Birkenau and in the official documentation—beginning with the explanatory reports (*Erläuterungsberichte*)¹²⁵ and the cost estimates (*Kostenanschlätze or Kostenvoranschläge*)¹²⁶ of the camp and of the "turn-over" (*Übergabeverhandlung*) of these installations,¹²⁷ the Birkenau crematoria were normally referred to as II, III, IV and V; in a few documents, the designation I, II, III and IV appears. But Venezia never mentions this double numbering system, which was obviously unknown to him. If he had really been employed in the *Sonderkommando*, he would have known the correct number of the crematorium in which he worked. The fact that he alternates between one number and the other indiscriminately shows that his account is based on what he has read, instead of on personal experience.

Of what was the gas chamber constructed? Surprisingly, in the book Venezia does not describe it at all: he indicates neither the dimensions, nor its location within the building, how it was accessed, how it was rigged out on the inside, whether it was divided into two areas (as stated by H. Tauber) or whether it consisted of one single room (as declared by M. Nyiszli).

Here he has also wasted an excellent opportunity to provide a definitive clarification, with the authority of his eyewitness testimony, of one of the most important and controversial points of the supposed extermination process in Crematoria II and III: the structure of the supposed devices for the introduction of Zyklon B into the gas chamber. Were they simple hollow "square sheet-metal columns" with holes in each of the four surfaces, as claimed by M. Nyiszli?¹²⁸ Did they have "a spiral" inside to distribute the Zyklon B uniformly, as stated by F. Müller?¹²⁹ Or perhaps they were not of sheet metal, but of metallic mesh, with a square section of 70 cm on each side, as testified by M. Kula (the self-proclaimed builder of the devices),¹³⁰ or 35 cm, as affirmed by J. Sackar,¹³¹ or 25 cm, as declared by K. Schultze?¹³² And if they were of metallic mesh inside, did they have a short "Zyklon B diffusion and recovery cone" which was inserted into the higher

part of the device, as asserted by Kula, or a “little basket” which was pulled upwards “with the help of an iron wire,” as we are informed by H. Tauber?¹³³ Or, as S. Chasan informs us, did they consist of perforated round metallic tubing, which did not, however, reach the floor, but had a free empty space at the bottom to recover the Zyklon B granules?¹³⁴ Or, as maintained by J. Weiss, “There were three columns for the Ventilators, through which the gas was poured in”?¹³⁵ Or, according to J. Erber’s description, the devices all had the following characteristic in common: they were iron pipes (*Eisenröhre*) but, at the same time, “they were surrounded by a steel network” and had a “sheet metal container” (*Blechbehälter*) inside, which they could pull up and down by means of a cord?¹³⁶

With regards to all this, Venezia tells us absolutely nothing: from his eyewitness testimony; we learn neither how the supposed Zyklon B introduction devices were designed, how many of them there were, how they were employed, or even if they really existed! And judging from the fact that, according to him, the Zyklon B was simply “thrown on the floor” inside the gas chamber—as we shall see below—he knows nothing whatever about such devices.

To obtain a meager description of the supposed gas chamber, we must return to his testimony of 1995: “This was a large room, on the ceiling there was a fake shower head every meter,”¹³⁷ or to his testimony in January 2001, which is no less terse:¹³⁸

“The people were convinced that they were going to take a shower and therefore there was a large room with so many fake shower heads.”

These statements require clarification.

The turnover document (*Übergabeverhandlung*) for Crematorium III to the camp administration, dated 24 June 1943, assigns “14 *Brausen*” (shower heads) to Leichenkeller 1, the supposed homicidal gas chamber.¹³⁹ These shower heads, starting with Pressac, are usually considered “fake.” The reality is quite different. They were the implementation of a well-documented previously existing plan.

On 16 May 1943, Bischoff sent Hans Kammler, *Amtsgruppenschef C* of the SS-WVHA, a “Report on measures taken to implement the special program ordered within the KGL [prisoner of war camp] Auschwitz by SS-Brigadeführer and Generalmajor der Waffen-SS Kammler, Doctor of Engineering” (*Bericht über die getroffenen Massnahmen für die Durchführung des durch SS-Brigadeführer und Generalmajor der Waffen-SS Dr. Ing. Kammler angeordneten Sonderprogrammes im KGL. Auschwitz*) in which, at Item 6, we read:

“Disinfestation plant. An Organization Todt disinfestation plant for the disinfestation of prisoners’ clothing is anticipated in each of the individual parts of the BAI camp.¹⁴⁰ To ensure the thorough physical disinfestation of the prisoners, storage heaters and boilers should be mounted in the two existing prisoners’ bathrooms in the BAI so that hot water will be available for the existing shower room. Heating coils are moreover to be mounted inside the waste incinerator of Crematorium III to obtain the [hot] water needed for a shower installation to be built in the cellar of Crematorium III. With regards to execution of construction for this plant, we have negotiated this with the firm Topf and Sons of Erfurt.”

German original:¹⁴¹

“Entwesungsanlage. Zur Entwesung der Häftlingskleider ist jeweils in den einzelnen Teillagern des BAI eine OT-Entwesungsanlage vorgesehen. Um eine einwandfreie Körperentlausung für die Häftlinge durchführen zu können, werden in den beiden bestehenden Häftlingsbädern im BAI Heizkessel und Boiler eingebaut, damit für die bestehende Brauseanlage warmes Wasser zur Verfügung steht. Weiters ist geplant, im Krematorium III in dem Müllverbrennungssofen Heizschlangen einzubauen, um durch diese das Wasser für eine im Keller des Krematoriums III zu errichtende Brauseanlage zu gewinnen. Bezüglich Durchführung der Konstruktion für diese Anlage wurde mit der Firma Topf & Söhne, Erfurt, verhandelt.”

The showers, therefore, were real.¹⁴²

In the book, Venezia limits himself to saying:¹⁴³

“After having undressed, the women entered into the gas chamber, waited, thinking that they were in a shower room, with the faucets up high.[?]”

In addition to the supposed fake shower heads, Venezia had previously mentioned only the door of the supposed gas chamber:

“Then they closed the door, which was made like that of a refrigerator, with a little porthole to be able to see inside.”¹⁴⁴

“Finally, they closed the door, similar to that in the refrigerator in butcher shops, a double door with a peephole in the middle to see inside.”¹⁴⁵

In the book, Venezia only added that the door “to the inside was protected by a few iron bars to keep the victims from breaking the glass”¹⁴⁶—a detail which is however taken from a drawing by D. Olère, to which I will return

shortly—which shows precisely the open door to the gas chamber with the spy-hole protected on the inside by a square grill.¹⁴⁷ The drawing, in turn, is freely inspired by the gas-tight door with spy-hole equipped on the inside with a hemispheric protection grid, which was found in the *Bauhof* (construction materials warehouse) of Auschwitz in 1945, as appears in the photographs reproduced by Pressac.¹⁴⁸ Without going into further detail, I will restrict myself to noting that the door of *Leichenkeller* 1 (supposed gas chamber) of Crematorium III was built without a protection grid.

Bischoff's letter to the DAW (*Deutsche Ausrüstungswerke*) offices dated 31 March 1943 makes reference to an order dated 6 March concerning "a gas-tight door" (*Gastür*)¹⁴⁹ 100/192 for *Leichenkeller* 1 of Crematorium III, BW 30a," which had to be "built exactly according to the type and dimensions of the cellar door (*Kellertür*) of Crematorium II in front, with a spy-hole sealed with double 8 mm glass with rubber seal and mounting (*mit Guckloch aus doppelten 8-mm-Glas mit Gummidichtung und Beschlag*)."¹⁵⁰ With regards to the door of Crematorium II, in his deposition dated 24 May 1945, before examining magistrate J. Sehn, H. Tauber, who had seen this door in the *Bauhof*,¹⁵¹ declared that the door of the supposed gas chamber had a little window "protected on the inside by a metallic grill in the form of a half-moon," but because the latter was regularly damaged by the victims, "the spyhole was hidden by a board or a metal sheet."¹⁵²

Venezia dwells, instead, on the description of the gassing process and the appearance of the victims. In this regard he states:¹⁵³

"At last the German arrived with the gas. He took two prisoners from the Sonderkommando to raise the trapdoor from the outside, above the gas chamber, and introduced the Zyklon B. The cover, of cement, was very heavy. The German would never have taken the trouble to lift it all by himself; we did it together. Sometimes me, sometimes others."

This statement is in radical contradiction with all the more widely believed statements. For example, the witness F. Müller states that the Zyklon B was poured by two SS "disinfectors."¹⁵⁴ Still more clearly, the witness M. Nyzsli, whom Venezia mentions in the books as "Hungarian Jewish physician and assistant to Mengele,"¹⁵⁵ states:¹⁵⁸

"In this precise moment, we heard the noise of an automobile. It is a luxury car, bearing the insignia of the Red Cross International. Two SS officers get out of the car and an S.D.G. Sanitätsdienstgefreiter (non-commissioned officer from the Health Service).^[156] The non-commissioned officer is carrying four green tin cans. He walks across the lawn where, every thirty meters,^[157] small concrete pots protrude from the

ground. After putting on a gas mask, he raises the lid of the chimney pot, which is also of concrete. He opens a can and pours the contents, a purplish, granular material, into the mouth of the chimney."

And here is the related testimony of H. Tauber:¹⁵⁹

"[SS-Rottenführer] Scheimetz opened the tin with the help of a special punch and a hammer, then poured the contents into the gas chamber and closed the opening [of the small chimneys] with a concrete lid. As I have already said, there were four of these small chimneys. In each of them, Scheimetz poured the contents of a smaller tin of Zyklon. They were containers with a yellow label. Before opening them, Scheimetz put on a gas mask. He had the mask on when he opened the tins with the Zyklon and poured the content into the small chimneys of the gas chamber. Besides Scheimetz, other SS carried out this task, but I have forgotten their names."

This is in later contradiction to the following statement by Venezia:¹⁶⁰

"Some people say that the SS wore gas masks, but I never saw Germans wearing them, neither to pour the gas nor to open the door."

Incredibly, Venezia is unaware of the story of the small exterior chimneys for the introduction of Zyklon B into the gas chamber, since he speaks of a simple "trapdoor," obviously installed on the roof of the area, which had a concrete cover. This detail originates from the deposition of H. Tauber.¹⁶¹ And, mentioning "the trapdoor," he reveals that he does not even know that the supposed openings for the Zyklon B in *Leichenkeller* 1 of Crematoria II and III should have been four in number.

The filling of the gas chamber by the SS, described by Venezia, contains an obvious contradiction in terms:¹⁶²

"The men were instead sent into the gas chamber at the end, when the room was already full. The Germans made about thirty strong men enter last, in such a way that, pressed by blows, driven like animals, they had no choice but to push the others ahead to enter and escape the blows."

But "strong men" were not sent to the gas chamber but rather, to work.

And here is the description of the bodies in the gas chamber:¹⁶³

"There we found them grasping each other, each one in desperate search of a bit of air. The gas, thrown on the floor, developed acids [sic] from the bottom; everyone attempted to reach the air, even if they had to climb on top of each other, until the others died too."

This scene is taken, very unwisely, from the testimony of M. Nyiszli. Nyiszli in fact wrote:¹⁶⁴

“The bodies were not lying here and there throughout the room, but piled in a mass to the ceiling. The reason for this was that the gas first infused the lower layers of air and rose but slowly towards the ceiling. This forced the victims to trample one another in a frantic effort to escape the gas. Yet a few feet higher up the gas reached them.”

The witness had built this fictitious scene on the supposition that the gas employed for homicidal purposes was not hydrocyanic acid (the active ingredient of Zyklon B), but “chlorine in a granulated form,”¹⁶⁵ and it is known that chlorine has a greater density than air,¹⁶⁶ so that if this gas had been introduced into the chamber, it would have first filled the lower layers of air and would have climbed slowly upwards. But as the historian Georges Wellers has noted:^{167,168}

“Hydrocyanic acid vapor is lighter than air, and therefore rises in air.”

Precisely the contrary of that asserted by M. Nyiszli. The scene described by him and borrowed by Venezia is therefore completely invented.

In this non-description of the gas chamber, the most incredible aspect, as I have noted above, is the absence of any reference to the presumed devices of metallic mesh for the introduction of Zyklon B. For years now, revisionist researchers have shown that these presumed devices are a simple literary expedient without any documentary or material basis.¹⁶⁹ Venezia, instead of contradicting them, at least on the level of eyewitness testimony, on this fundamental point of the story of the homicidal gassings in Crematoria II and III of Birkenau, does not even touch on the question!

Venezia says practically nothing about the ventilation system of *Leichenkeller* 1. All we are able to glean from his testimony is that, after the ventilation was started, “for about twenty minutes we heard an intense buzzing, like a machine which was sucking the air”¹⁷⁰ and that “the ventilator continued to purify the air”¹⁷¹ (emphasis added).

But the ventilation installation of *Leichenkeller* 1 consisted of two ventilators: an intake, which blew the air in (*Belüftung*), and an outlet, which sucked the air out (*Entlüftung*).

The most surprising thing is nevertheless the fact that, while the supposed gas chamber of Crematorium III, for access, required approximately twenty minutes of mechanical ventilation, that of “Bunker 2,” which was not equipped with any ventilation installation at all, could be entered immediately after the doors were opened:¹⁷²

"Ten minutes afterwards a door was opened opposite the entrance. The chief called me to drag the bodies out."

Still more incredibly, Venezia never mentions gas masks, without which the prisoners in the "Sonderkommando" would have been gassed in turn: certainly, in "Bunker 2," very probably in Crematorium III. F. Müller has written in this regard:¹⁷³

"While the dead were carried out of the gas chamber, the carriers of bodies had to wear gas masks, because the ventilators could not completely exhaust the gas. Above all, among the dead there were always residues of the toxic gas which were released during the clearing of the gas chamber."

One last observation. Venezia states:¹⁷⁴

"The undressing lasted an hour, an hour and a half, often two hours, it depended on the persons: the older they were, the more time it took and the first ones to enter the gas chamber could remain there waiting for more than an hour."

And here is L. Cohen's related declaration:¹⁷⁵

*"[Question] How long did they remain in the undressing room?
[Cohen] About 20 minutes, sometimes half an hour."*

11. The Transport of the Bodies to the Ovens of Crematorium III

Venezia describes the transfer of the bodies to the ovens as follows:¹⁷⁶

"In the end, the easiest thing was to take a cane and drag the body with the crook of the cane hooked around the neck. You see it in a drawing by David Olère. With all the old persons doomed to die, there was certainly no shortage of canes."

The drawing in question is reproduced on the following page of the book. It shows the entrance to the supposed gas chamber, with the door open (equipped with a peephole protected by a square grill, of which I have spoken); one inmate is at work at the entrance, another is dragging the body of a woman by its left hand, and the body of child by its left hand, towards the ovens. In the left-hand part of the drawing we see the edge of the last 3-muffle oven. In this drawing it is obvious that the instrument with which the above-mentioned prisoner is dragging the woman cannot be a walking cane, because the instrument in the prisoner's hand possess a crook-like curve, which, by contrast, according to Venezia, should have been hooked

around the woman's neck. The instrument is more probably a belt pulled around the woman's neck. The belt is in fact mentioned, in various variants by other witnesses. M. Nyiszli, for example, has written:¹⁷⁷

"Again straps were fixed to the wrists of the dead, and they were dragged onto specially constructed chutes which unloaded them in front of the furnaces."

The scene described is clearly false, because it shows the supposed gas chamber on the ground floor, in direct communication with the oven rooms. The area is well-known to have been located in the cellar (*Keller-geschoss*) of the crematorium, and Venezia himself speaks of the freight elevator used to transport the bodies from the supposed gas chamber to the oven rooms.¹⁷⁸

Nevertheless, incredibly, neither Venezia, nor M. Pezzetti ever noted this grotesque architectural error.

Again, with reference to the transfer of bodies, Venezia adds:¹⁷⁹

"In the drawing by David Olère, we see a corridor of water before the ovens which were used to transport the bodies more easily between the freight elevator and the ovens. We threw water into that rivulet and the bodies slid without too much effort."

This "corridor of water" recalls the "wet slide" mentioned by M. Nyiszli. The drawing in question appears on the following page of the book.¹⁸⁰ For the moment, I will examine only the right-hand part of the drawing. I will discuss the left-hand part of the drawing, which shows the muffle-loading technique, later. To the right, therefore, we see the aperture of the freight elevator with an open double door.

A brief digression is necessary here. Venezia writes that "the freight elevators did not have any doors; a wall blocked one side and above the bodies were loaded from the other side."¹⁸¹ This description is not only in conflict with Olère's drawing, but, even more seriously, with the design of the freight elevator installed in Crematorium III. This is design 5037 drawn by the *Gustav Linse Spezialfabrik f.[ür] Aufzüge* (manufacturer of special freight elevators) of Erfurt on 25 January 1943, bearing the heading "*Lasten-Aufzug bis 750 kg Tragkraft für Zentralbauleitung der Waffen SS, Auschwitz/O.S.*" (freight elevator up to 750 kg capacity for the *Zentralbauleitung der Waffen SS*, Auschwitz Upper Silesia).¹⁸² This drawing shows that the freight elevator had a double door on both sides. One opened towards the oven room, the other towards the area designated "*Waschraum und Aufbahrungsraum*" of which I have already spoken.

Let us return to Olère's drawing. Starting with the freight elevator, along the walls of the oven room with the windows, on the pavement, there ran a wet slide approximately a meter and half wide.¹⁸³ On top of this there are no bodies; a pile of bodies does appear instead between the slide and the ovens. In reality, this slide existed in Crematorium II. In the oven room, in front of each muffle, in the pavement, three pairs of rails were originally installed, linked to two oven-loading rails (*Gleis zur Beschickung der Öfen*), arranged perpendicularly to the first, right up to the freight elevator (*Aufzug*). Along the rails, there ran the corpse-insertion cart, which was called "*Sarg-Einführungs-Vorrichtung*," a device for the introduction of the coffin. In March 1943, it was decided to replace this device with more practical "body stretchers" (*Leichentragen*).¹⁸⁴ The ruins of the oven room at Crematorium II still exhibit the rails located in front of the muffles; the loading rails which travelled to the freight elevator were, by contrast, torn up and the various grooves in which they were lodged mark out precisely a strip of concrete which appears to be a slide. In Crematorium III, it was decided, starting at the end of September 1942, to replace the body-loading cart with stretchers;¹⁸⁵ therefore no rails were installed in the oven room and there was no "slide" in front of the freight elevator.

Venezia's narrative is also inspired by other drawings by Olère.

The tale of the victims who, unable to walk, were carried to the crematoria by truck and were thrown down by overturning the large dump truck "like sand, to be unloaded and they fell one on top of each other,"¹⁸⁶ is a simple comment on the related drawing by Olère, presented as "women selected in the camp, unloaded in front of Crematorium III."¹⁸⁷

The absurd story which, according to him, had been reported by several men from the *Sonderkommando*, according to which "in Crematorium V, the trucks unloaded the victims directly, while they were still alive, in the pits, which were burning under the open sky,"¹⁸⁸ similarly originates from two of Olère's drawings, not published in Venezia's book. These bear the following caption: "SS throwing live children in a burning pit (Bunker 2/V)." The two drawings (the first and the draft of the second) show the rear part of a truck on the edge of a burning 'cremation pit'; the large hopper, full of children, is tilting towards the pit and from the hopper an SS man, also on the edge of the pit, is grabbing the children and throwing them in; another soldier, also on the edge of the pit, salutes with a stiff arm. In reality, the two soldiers, because of the heat radiated by the bonfire, would have been burnt alive, while the gas tank of the truck would have exploded in a few minutes.

Venezia is referring to two Germans who were at the door of the gas chamber:¹⁸⁹ why precisely two? Because the related drawing by D. Olère shows—you guessed it—two Germans.¹⁹⁰

The portrait of *SS-Unterscharführer* Johann Gorges¹⁹¹ painted by D. Olère,¹⁹² suggests the following description to Venezia:¹⁹³

“Tall, with a broad face, but I can’t remember his name. He resembled one of the SS drawn by David Olère.”

The idea is taken from F. Müller, who describes “Gorges” physically, claiming that among other things he was tall (one meter eighty centimeters).¹⁹⁴

The anecdote of the child found alive in the gas chamber, set forth by Venezia with a wealth of details, parties an example of the hyperdramatic fabrications characteristic of this type of literature, like that of the relatives whom one meets in the gas chamber.¹⁹⁵ For example, M. Nyiszli dedicates an entire chapter to this anecdote: in this tale, the victim in question is a girl.¹⁹⁶ Venezia refers, instead, to finding a girl two months old, alive, in the gas chamber.¹⁹⁷

12. Crematory Furnaces and Cremation

Venezia provides no description of the oven room or the crematory ovens: he does not even say how many there were, much less how they were designed or how they worked.

The only thing he tells us in this regard is the loading of a muffle of an oven:¹⁹⁸

“In front of each muffle, three men were busy putting the bodies into the oven. The bodies were arranged on a sort of stretcher, one for the head and one for the feet. Two men, on both sides of the stretcher, raised it with the help of a long piece of wood inserted from beneath. The third man, in front of the oven, pushed the handles and pushed the stretcher into the oven. He had to make the bodies slide inside, and then pull the stretcher away before the iron got too hot. The men from the Sonderkommando had gotten into the habit of pouring water on the stretcher before arranging the bodies on it, to keep them from sticking to the red-hot iron; otherwise the work would have become even more difficult: they had to detach the bodies with a fork and pieces of flesh remained stuck to the stretcher.”

This narrative is the result of an incautious fusion of the drawing by D. Olère which appears on the following page of his book, with an echo of the

related tale by H. Tauber. The design is that which I have already examined in detail in relation with the supposed “wet slide,” which was located in the right-hand part of the drawing.¹⁹⁹ To the left, there appears precisely the scene of the three prisoners introducing the bodies into the central muffle of an oven with the *Leichentrage*. This scene can not correspond to reality.

First of all, the dimensions of the aperture of the muffle, and consequently of the ovens, are absolutely nonsensical. The apex of the vault of the door of the muffle by far exceeds the heads of the three prisoners, while in reality it was located only 132 centimeters from the floor.²⁰⁰ If D. Olère had depicted the muffle with its real dimensions, he would not have been able to depict the scene of the simultaneous loading of three bodies. On the other hand, such a method of loading would also have impeded the combustion process: the bodies would have obstructed the apertures between the muffles through which the gases originating from the gas producers flowed from the side muffles into the central muffle, as well as the apertures in the grid of this same muffle, through which the burnt gases entered the underlying smoke conduit.

Secondly, the drawing shows flames and smoke issuing from the open muffle, which is impossible, because smoke and flames were immediately sucked away by the draft of the chimney, into the central muffle, all the more intensely since the apertures in the discharge conduit of the 3-muffle oven linked to the chimney were located precisely inside the central muffle, in the cinerary below. The door of the central muffle opened to the right: as a result, the prisoner shown to the right, raising the stretcher, would have been standing in front of the inner side of the door, which had a working temperature of 800°C. This prisoner, who, like his two companions, appears with a naked torso, would have suffered fatal burns from the heat of the cast-iron door.

Moreover, the loading technique described in the drawing is also erroneous. The 3-muffle oven was equipped with two rollers (*Laufrollen*), attached to a tip-up frame pivoting on a round attachment iron (*Befestigungs-Eisen*) welded to the anchor bars of the oven underneath the doors of the muffle. These rollers served initially for the sliding into the muffle of the loading beam of the body-introduction cart, later for the sliding of the *Leichentrage*, whose lateral tubes, as long as the rollers, were supported precisely on top of the rollers, to permit the stretcher to slide inside the muffle. This is precisely what Tauber reports, who however adds that the operation was performed by six prisoners, not by three. The technique described in the drawing by Olère would have required at any rate at least

four prisoners, since the prisoner assigned to the stretcher would not have been able, all by himself, to “cause the bodies to slide in” onto the refractory grid of the muffle. This as Tauber says, was the task of another prisoner, who had to hold the bodies in place with a scraper while the stretcher was being extracted from the muffle.²⁰¹

The rollers permitted the two prisoners raising the stretcher with an iron bar (not with “a piece of wood,” as Venezia carelessly assumes from the drawing by D. Olère) to remain at a safe distance from the open door of the muffle, preventing them from burning themselves.

The most surprising thing is that D. Olère, in the fifth 3-muffle crematory oven, has correctly drawn both the attachment bar, and the rollers!

Venezia, finally, freely inspired by Tauber’s account, has forgotten to state that the water poured onto the stretcher had to be soaped.²⁰²

“They melted soap in the water, so that the bodies slid better on the stretcher.”

Let’s go on to the essential question of the cremation capacity of the ovens.

In his first statement, Venezia affirmed in this regard:²⁰³

“After these operations the bodies were thrown on freight elevators, which carried them to the ground floor where the crematory ovens were. There other prisoners inserted them into the ovens, two or three at a time. After 20 minutes, only ashes and pieces of the largest bones remained.”

This information—3 bodies in 15 muffles in 20 minutes for 24 hours – is taken from the testimony of M. Nyiszli.²⁰⁴

“There they were laid out in threes on a kind of pushcart made of sheet metal. [...] The bodies were cremated in twenty minutes.”

This corresponds to a theoretical maximum crematory capacity of $(3 \times 15 \times 24 \times 60 \div 20 =) 3,240$ bodies in 24 hours.

In open contradiction to the above, in the interview published by *Il Giornale* and by *Gente*, Shlomo Venezia declared:²⁰⁵

“[Question] How many hours a day did the ovens function?

[Venezia] 24 hours a day. We worked shifts from 8 in the morning to 10 at night, or from 10 at night to 8 in the morning. We cremated 550-600 Jews a day.”

Therefore, the maximum crematory capacity of the ovens of Crematorium III was 600 bodies per 24 hours; the difference between 600 and 3,240 is not trivial. Venezia also claims:²⁰⁶

“The gas chamber had a capacity of approximately 1,400 persons, but the Nazis succeeded in cramming in 1,700.”

So that to cremate one load of gassing victims took ($1,700 \div 600 =$) almost 3 days (in reality almost 6 days), and he has also clearly stated:²⁰⁷

“On average, the entire process of elimination of a convoy lasted 72 hours. Killing them was quick, but burning the bodies took longer: there was not a minute to rest.”

He has thus confirmed the maximum cremation capacity of 600 bodies in 24 hours. But in his book, Venezia writes:²⁰⁸

“Crematoria IV and V were smaller than Crematoria II and III; the ovens didn’t work as well and had less capacity. The pits permitted us to accelerate the pace of the work: burning seven hundred bodies in such small ovens was a long operation, all the more so because the ovens did not function correctly. Where we were, by contrast, we could cremate up to one thousand eight hundred persons.”

The crematory capacity of a typical II/III crematorium adopted by the witness, therefore, before rises from 3,240 to 550-600 and then falls to 1,800 bodies in 24 hours, without any explanation.

At this point, it is interesting to read the testimony of Venezia’s fellow unfortunates. His cousin Y. Gabai claimed that they loaded four bodies in every muffle (*vier Leichen*), which burned completely in half an hour, so that the capacity of Crematorium III was ($4 \times 15 \times 24 \times 60 \div 30 =$) 2,880 bodies in 24 hours.²⁰⁹

J. Sackar stated:

“In the oven, the fire [sic] was so hot that the bodies burned immediately [sofort] and we could introduce other bodies continually.”

This fantastic immediate cremation meant that, in all the crematoria at Birkenau, it was possible to cremate “almost 20,000 men [sic] a day”!²¹⁰

The capacity pertaining to Crematorium III, considering that the total number of muffles was 46, 15 of which were located in this crematorium, amounted to ($[20,000 \div 46] \times 15$) approximately 6,500 bodies in 24 hours.

S. Chasan affirms on the other hand that in every muffle they loaded “between two and five bodies,” and that the cremation lasted half an hour, so that “every half hour we could cremate from 50 to 75 bodies,” or, rather, at a maximum, precisely ($75 \div 15 =$) 5 bodies per muffle. This means 150 bodies in one hour and 3,600 in 24 hours.

Let’s summarize the statements of the witnesses on this crucial aspect of the supposed extermination process in a table:

Witness	Cremation Capacity
Venezia 1	3,240
Venezia 2	550-600
Venezia 3	1,800
Gabai	2,880
Sackar	6,500
Chasan	3,600

Recall that the witnesses were referring to the same installations over the same period.

Nevertheless, over the course of the interrogations to which they were subjected by the Soviet counterespionage service, the Topf engineers Kurt Prüfer and Karl Schultze, who had designed the 3-muffle oven and the blower, respectively, both declared that the cremation of one single body in one muffle required one hour²¹¹ and that this was precisely the effective capacity shown by other equivalent technical sources.²¹² Therefore, the maximum theoretical crematory capacity of the model II/III crematorium was (15 x 24 =) 360 bodies in 24 hours. I say “theoretical,” because the crematory ovens could not function continually 24 hours a day, as I will soon explain.

In his interview published in *Gente*, the question “How many hours a day did the ovens operate?” is formulated as follows: “Were the ovens always alight?” The answer is the same: “Twenty four hours a day.”²¹³ This is another thermo-technical absurdity, because the ovens at Birkenau, being fuelled with coke, had to be shut down daily to clean the grids of the gas producers. This was explicitly prescribed by the service manuals of 2- and 3-muffle ovens from Topf, the manufacturer:

“Every evening, it will be necessary to clean the slag off the grids of the gas producers and extract the ashes.”

German original:²¹⁴

“Jeden Abend müssen die Generatorroste von den Koksschlacken befreit und die Asche herausgenommen werden.”

But this was also declared by Prof. Roman Dawidowski, prosecution expert at the Höss trial, and accepted by the examining magistrate J. Sehn, who wrote that the crematory ovens of Auschwitz-Birkenau required every day “an interval of three hours to clean the gas producers of slag.”²¹⁵

I should add that the estimate of the coke consumption of the Birkenau crematoria drawn up by a civilian employee of the Auschwitz *Zentralbau-*

leitung on 17 March 1943 presupposed that the ovens would function 12 hours a day.²¹⁶

Venezia further affirms that the ashes of the bodies

*"[...] were taken to an area of flat cement behind the crematorium, where the bones were crushed by the prisoners with devices similar to those used to beat sampietrini [Roman-style cobble stones]."*²¹⁷

This story is taken from the testimony of F. Müller, who has written:²¹⁸

"To be able to eliminate rapidly and without being too obvious, the ashes originating from the crematoria and pits, Moll had paved, near the crematorium, beside the pits, a surface area of approximately 60 x 16 meters, on which the ashes of the pits were then finely pulverized by means of mallets."

Nevertheless, for F. Müller, the supposed "area of flat concrete" was located exclusively "in the courtyard inside Crematorium V,"²¹⁹ while Venezia places it in the courtyard of Crematorium III. In reality, such an "area of flat concrete" never existed, either in the courtyard of Crematorium V or in that of Crematorium III: of the latter there does not exist any trace in the American aerial photographs of Birkenau of 1944, in particular, in those, very clear, taken on 31 May 1944,²²⁰ nor are there any architectural remains in situ.

In the book, Venezia abandoned the story of the "area of flat concrete," writing vaguely:²²¹

"The bones were crushed before being mixed with the ashes. The operation occurred in the courtyard of the Crematorium, behind the building. In Crematorium III, the place for grinding the ashes was located in the angle, near the hospital and the gypsy camp. The ashes were crushed and passed through a sieve like those used by bricklayers, several times, were then transported on a small wheelbarrow."

But the reference to the wheelbarrow is also taken from Müller's testimony.²²²

13. The Flaming Chimneys

In his first interview, Venezia recounted the hackneyed story of the flaming chimneys:²²³

"From the window one could see flames, it was a horrible thing, the flames issued from a chimney [...]."

We still didn't know anything, we had seen the flames and they had told us that there were crematoria [...]."

As I have repeatedly noted, the story of the flaming chimneys is a technical absurdity.²²⁴ The witness probably had an inkling of this, because he did not thereafter repeat it. In the interview published in *Il Giornale*, he declared: "Upon arrival however, I immediately noticed the smoke issuing from the chimneys."²²⁵

Venezia did not mention this fanciful story even in his book, but here appears a drawing by Olère which represents "the Crematorium II in operation" with the flaming chimney!²²⁶

By way of compensation, Venezia recounts another story which regards the chimney of Crematorium III:²²⁷

"The work was never supposed to stop; we worked in two shifts, one day and one night shift. An endless chain, without interruption. Only once we were compelled to suspend the work for two days due to a problem at the smoke stack. A few bricks had melted due to the excessive heat and had obstructed the flue. For the Germans, to lose two working days was a tragedy. A young Polish Jew, covered by sacks to protect himself from the soot and heat, opened the base of the chimney laterally and extracted the glistening bricks, incrustated with human fat which had caused the problem."

The anecdote is loosely inspired by an event (partly fantastic) described by Müller, which however dates back to 1942:²²⁸

"The flames were already vigorously fanned and the heat had already reached such an intensity that the refractory bricks of the chimney dissolved and the oven caught fire, while bricks fell into the duct which united the oven to the chimney."

Venezia's account is unreal as well as rather disingenuous. First of all, the chimney did not have "a flue," but "flues": three of them. In the second place, each flue was 80 x 120 cm in vertical section, and each one entered a smoke conduit of identical dimensions. For this reason, "a few bricks" would not have obstructed anything. In the third place, when damage occurred, the camp administration turned to the Topf company if the damage involved the ovens, and the Koehler company if the damage involved the smoke conduits and chimney, which were built by Koehler. For example, on 9 May 1944, the Bauleiter of KL II (Birkenau) requested the camp command for "permission" to access Crematoria I-IV" ("*Genehmigung zum Betreten der Krematorien I-IV*") for the Koehler company, because it

was assigned with “urgent repair work in the crematoria” (“*mit dringenden Instandsetzungsarbeiten bei Krematorien beauftragt ist*”).²²⁹

But if a prisoner had to enter the chimney, he would not have opened “the base of the chimney laterally [?],” but rather the cleaning door (*Reinigungstür*) located at the base of the chimney, about which Venezia evidently knew nothing.

Finally, in the crematory ovens, which functioned at a working temperature of 800°C, the fat from the bodies burned completely inside the muffles, so that no bricks “encrusted with human fat” could have been found inside the chimney.”

Venezia also speaks of a “chimney room,” which he describes as follows.²³⁰

“Thus from time to time, when I could take a break and let the others continue for a little while without me, I went up into that little square room and played the harmonica to relax or simply to lean on the window sill to get some air. That little room, with a window and the large chimney conduit in the center, of bricks, square, was my refuge.”

But the “chimney room” was the “*Müllverbrennungsraum*,” the room housing the trash incinerator (*Müllverbrennungsofen*) and the big chimney, which was not square, by the way, but rectangular (it measured approximately 4 x 2.5 m); it was obviously not a “little room,” because it measured 10 x 8 m, in addition to which it had 4 windows and 2 small windows. On the other side of the chimney, towards the oven room, separated by a wall, were three small square rooms. The central room, in Crematorium II, was originally intended to house one of the three counterflow induced-draft installations (*Saugzuganlagen*), which were not installed in Crematorium III; the two side rooms, each one with a window, was referred to as the “*Motorraum*” (motor room). Only the room in the middle had “in the centre, the large conduit from the brick chimney,” but this was invisible, on the other side of the room, in the *Müllverbrennungsraum*, in addition to which it did not have any window. Moreover these three rooms were located on the level of the oven room, so that one could not “go up” into any of these. In short, the room described by Venezia did not exist.

14. The Revolt of the *Sonderkommando*

Venezia dedicates an entire chapter to this matter, which begins as follows.²³¹

"The idea of the revolt was born before my arrival at Birkenau and had survived the several selections thanks to a few Kapos who, like Lemke or Kaminski, had been in the camp for a long time and had taken charge of organizing it."

In the interview published by *Il Giornale*, Venezia had explicitly stated that "on average every three months the *Sonderkommando* [sic] were killed in turn."²³² This story originates from M. Nyiszli, who had declared more expansively:²³³

"The Sonderkommando's future was tightly circumscribed by time. Four years' painful experience had shown that its life span was four months. At the end of that period a company of SS appeared. The entire kommando was herded into the crematorium's rear courtyard. A machinegun blast. Half an hour later a new Sonderkommando squad arrived."

I would like to comment with the words of Holocaust historian C. Sal-
etti:²³⁴

"The memorial texts and works of criticism on Auschwitz claimed that the average duration of the life of the prisoners in the Sonderkommando was no more than four months, and that once they exceed this period, they were regularly eliminated. Neither of these claims corresponds to the truth."

The story of the regular elimination of the prisoners of the "*Sonderkommando*" is also in conflict with what Venezia states as regards their surveillance:²³⁵

"In general, there were two SS for every crematorium; one during the day and the other at night."

The real number is hardly any higher: 22 guards in four crematoria, 10 in the day and 12 at night. These guards had to keep an eye on 870 prisoners from the so-called "*Sonderkommando*." In Crematorium III, 5 guards (2 in the day and 3 at night) had to watch 220 prisoners:²³⁶ not very many if the prisoners knew they were absolutely certain to die!

As to the rest, Venezia is extremely evasive. He does not mention the official date of the supposed²³⁷ revolt (7 October 1944), but speaks generically of the beginning of October;²³⁸ he does not mention the supposed preliminary selection and gassing at the end of September 1944 of 200 prisoners of the "*Sonderkommando*" of Crematoria IV and V, which is supposed to have triggered the revolt a few days afterwards;²³⁹ he does mention the number of supposed casualties: 451; he does not mention the number of

survivors: 212, most of them prisoners from Crematoria III and V; he does not mention the supposed selection on 26 November 1944, over the course of which another 100 prisoners are supposed to have been killed. He asserts that “the day afterwards,” *i.e.*, 18 October, “the Germans ordered that thirty persons be selected to continue work on Crematorium II and I decided to form part of the group,”²⁴⁰ while, by contrast, according to the official version, the 30 prisoners were selected on 26 November to work on Crematorium V. He adds:²⁴¹

“When the dismantling operations reached the roof of the Crematorium, the members of the Sonderkommando went back to sleep in the men’s camp, in the isolated barracks where we had passed the first nights with the Sonderkommando. There were less than seventy of us.”

Here, Venezia has obviously misunderstood the official version, according to which, on 26 November 1944, 70 prisoners were assigned to the *Abbruchkommando* (demolition commando), therefore, in the end, there remained “approximately 100 prisoners from the Sonderkommando,”²⁴² not “less than seventy.”

15. Salvation

Venezia, like his self-proclaimed former colleagues, claims to have escaped certain death by accident or as the result of a miracle, because all the prisoners in the “*Sonderkommando*” were to be killed. He had, as he writes, been aware of this from the beginning:²⁴³

“I always knew from him that those who formed part of the Sonderkommando were ‘selected’ and ‘transferred’ someplace else, but I didn’t understand that the words ‘selection’ and ‘transfer’ were euphemisms which, in reality, meant ‘elimination’. Nevertheless, it didn’t take me much time to understand that we had been integrated into the Sonderkommando in the place of other prisoners who had been ‘selected’ and killed.”

He later states:²⁴⁴

“For the Germans, the escape of a member of the Sonderkommando was very serious; they absolutely could not permit the escape of a man who had seen the interior of the gas chambers.”

Then how did he succeed in escaping? I’ll summarize his long narrative.

On 17 January 1945, the SS guard who accompanied the survivors of the *Sonderkommando* to their barracks told them “it was absolutely prohib-

ited to leave” and walked away. But Venezia came to know that the camp was in the course of being evacuated and understood that they would be killed. So they all left the barracks, mixing with the other prisoners. Thus, he succeeded in fleeing “the programmed liquidation of the *Sonderkommando*.” He then states:²⁴⁵

“From time to time, during the night, a German walked among the prisoners shouting: ‘Wer hat im Sonderkommando gearbeitet?’, ‘Who has worked in the Sonderkommando?’,”

which was not a very sensible question, since, as I have explained above, at Auschwitz-Birkenau there were at least eleven “*Sonderkommandos*.” Venezia continues:

“No one answered, they continued to ask at regular intervals, all along the road; they had no other way of finding us again.”

In reality, the prisoners were evacuated in transports bearing the last name, first name, and registration number. One of them even lists Filip Müller.²⁴⁶ Five Polish prisoners “from the *Sonderkommando*”²⁴⁷ had already been transferred to Mauthausen on 5 January 1945.²⁴⁸ The transfer was even recorded in the personnel cards of these prisoners, as shown by that of the *Kapo* M. Morawa.²⁴⁹ If, therefore, the SS had really wished to exterminate the prisoners from the “*Sonderkommando*,” there would have been no escape for these men.

Venezia and the other survivors of the “*Sonderkommando*” were later transferred to Mauthausen. Their evacuation transport reached the camp on 25 January: it consisted of 5,725 prisoners, who were registered under numbers 116501-122225.²⁵⁰

Venezia narrates the registration as follows:²⁵²

“I slept two nights in the open to be among the last ones to enter the Sauna. There was me and my brother, my cousins and other friends from Auschwitz. Soldiers passed by from the time to time asking: ‘Wer hat im Sonderkommando gearbeitet?’. To keep them from discovering us, I suggested to my brother that we change our names. Instead of ‘Venezia’, if they had asked me I would have replied that my name was ‘Benezia’. [...] Like the first day at Birkenau we were forced to undress completely, prisoners shaved our heads and body and assigned us a number. Unlike Auschwitz the number was not tattooed; Auschwitz is the only camp where the prisoners were tattooed. Instead, they gave us a sort of iron bracelet with an identity disk; on mine was written the number 118554, my registration number at Mauthausen. When they

asked me my name, I said 'Benezia' and they, misunderstanding me, wrote 'Benedetti'."²⁵¹

And with this subterfuge Venezia saved his life for the second time.

This story cannot be true for the simple fact that, as recalled by Venezia himself, he and his companions bore, tattooed on their arms, the indelible mark of their membership in the *Sonderkommando*: their Auschwitz registration number. If, therefore, the SS had really wished to trace the prisoners having worked in the crematoria, they would not have sent a soldier around to shout among the prisoners "*Wer hat im Sonderkommando gearbeitet?*," but they would have inspected the registration number of every prisoner in the sauna over the course of registration. Venezia's subterfuge is in fact transparently naive: he changed his last name to keep himself from being found out, therefore the SS had a list of names of prisoners from the *Sonderkommando*, but then they would inevitably have had a list of the registration numbers.²⁵³

It is therefore certain that the SS were not searching for prisoners from the *Sonderkommando*, either at Birkenau, nor at Mauthausen, and this is explained by the simple fact that these prisoners were not the bearers of any "terrible secret."

16. Epilogue

In the interview with Stefano Lorenzetto, Venezia, in reply to the question "How many years was it before you returned to Auschwitz?," he said:²⁵⁴

"Forty-seven. I didn't find the crematorium. I was disappointed, because I didn't know that the Germans had demolished it. It must have been hard work to demolish. It was built like the Coliseum: it was supposed to last eternity."

In the book, he confirms:²⁵⁵

"I didn't know that the Nazis, in fleeing, had blown up the crematoria; seeing the ruins surprised me."

In flagrant contradiction to the above, in the book, Venezia writes:²⁵⁶

"Towards the end of October [1944] the order arrived to begin dismantling the crematoria. We continued to work occasionally in Crematorium II on the rare occasions that a convoy arrived, but we worked above all on the dismantling of the other crematoria. It took a lot of time, because the Germans wanted to eliminate them one piece at a time. The structures were very solid; they were built to last a long time. They

could have used dynamite, but they wished systematically to demolish the entire interior of the structure: the ovens, the doors of the gas chamber and all the rest. And the men from the Sonderkommando had to do it; we were the only ones to be able to see the interior of the gas chambers. To disassemble the exterior structure on the other hand, other prisoners were used, among them women originating from Birkenau and prisoners from Auschwitz I."

Therefore, he had personally participated in the demolition of "his" crematorium!

The story narrated by Venezia also contains a chronological error. That which is known in this regard, is that the activity of Crematoria II and III ceased at the beginning of December 1944: on 1 December, a female commando was created for the demolition of Crematorium III;²⁵⁷ on the 8th, the head of the *Zentralbauleitung*, *SS-Obersturmführer* Werner Jothann, requested *Abteilung IIIa* (prisoner labor employment) for the immediate assignment of 100 prisoners for the demolition work "at the crematorium [in] Camp II" (*beim Krematorium Lager II*),²⁵⁸ undoubtedly Crematorium II. D. Czech reports that *Kommando 104b*, the crematory demolition squad, consisted of 70 prisoners from the "*Sonderkommando*"; these men drilled holes in the walls of the crematoria and the supposed gas chambers, in which explosive charges were inserted²⁵⁹—exactly the contrary of that which is asserted by Venezia.

17. Conclusion

The book *Sonderkommando Auschwitz* is presented as "The Truth about the Gas Chambers" and "A Unique Testimony." These reports are completely unfounded, even from the point of view of the historiography of the Holocaust.

The book supplies in fact no "truth" which was previously unknown and only repeats in a confused and vague manner some "truths" which were already known. It provides no major contribution, or even anything new, to our knowledge of Auschwitz, on the contrary, it systematically evades all historically relevant questions.

The chronology is practically non-existent. After the date of arrival at Auschwitz, on 11 April 1944,²⁶⁰ the next date to appear in the book is the beginning of October 1944,²⁶¹ so that the story of almost five months of activity of the *Sonderkommando* of Crematorium III takes place in a sort of "time outside time." Venezia provides no historically useful information on

this *Sonderkommando*: how many prisoners it consisted of, how they were allocated to the various crematoria, what their specific tasks were, etc. Even with regard to the final revolt of the *Sonderkommando* he offers no important details, not even the date. He speaks of Crematorium III in an extremely vague manner: he never describes the exterior, almost nothing about the layout of the interior, no description of the garret (known as the *Dachgeschoss*), where he lived.

The process of extermination, in Venezia's book, also remains lost in a fog.

There is no description of "Bunker 2"; or of the supposed "cremation pits," of which Venezia does not even indicate the number.

As regards Crematorium III, the description of the undressing room is almost non-existent, that of the gas chamber, non-existent. Historical problems essential to confuting "negationism," such as those of the Zyklon B introduction devices, vanish in an embarrassing silence; from the book, one learns neither the dimensions of the gas chamber, nor how it was designed,²⁶² or equipped or how the apertures of the induction and exhaust system were arranged, nor how one accessed the gas chamber from the undressing room. No description of the reinforced concrete lid on the Leichenkeller 1 in the north courtyard of the crematorium, whether it was on ground level or above ground, no description of the "chimney," and possibly how many there were or how they were arranged.

The same fog wafts over the narration of the cremation: here as well, everything escapes us and remains indistinct. Venezia tells us nothing about the crematory ovens: their construction system, their functioning, their coke consumption, not even how many there were. On their cremation capacity, by contrast, he provides very precise, but technically absurd details which contradict each other.

In the context of the Holocaust, therefore, this testimony may be referred to as "unique" only for its inconsistency, its impalpability, its evanescence, its total and extraordinary lack of concreteness and precision.

The historians who cooperated with Venezia in this publishing project²⁶³ show all the shortcomings of an atavistic ineptitude. Their most obvious contribution, in the text, is limited to a mere terminological revision²⁶⁴ and to the introduction of the technical terminology²⁶⁵ which was formerly absent, but not without a few blunders, such as in the case of the "*Leichenkeller*" or the term "*Stücke*." The presentation of the explanatory notes²⁶⁶ is wretched and sloppy. But it is not only a question of ineptitude. In the essay "The Shoah, Auschwitz and the *Sonderkommando*,"²⁶⁷ the Auschwitz "specialist" Marcello Pezzetti,²⁶⁸ in the bibliography, mentions

the book by Gideon Greif *Wir weinten tränenlos... Augenzeugenberichte der jüdischen "Sonderkommandos" in Auschwitz* which I have cited several times. The idea of the iconography *Sonderkommando Auschwitz* is clearly taken from this work: it contains in fact all the images which appear there.²⁶⁹ Notwithstanding that, M. Pezzetti has not informed the reader of the very important fact that the work by G. Greif compiles the testimony of four supposed companions from the *Sonderkommando* of Venezia, among them the cousin Yakob Gabbai. This serious oversight becomes crucial in view of the incredible contradictions which such testimony presents in comparison to that of Venezia. We must therefore suspect rather an intentional and covert silence.

No less serious is the fact that M. Pezzetti and his colleagues have covered up all the contradictions—which I have noted above—between Venezia's narrative compared to the canons of Holocaust historiography, all the chronological and architectural inconsistencies.

From a revisionist point of view, the judgment of Venezia's book is even more adverse.

In 1998, Valentina Pisanty, in a work on so-called "negationists," allowed a few devastating analyses to escape her concerning these Holocaust testimonies:²⁷⁰

"The writers often interweave their own direct observations with fragments of hearsay which was to be heard everywhere in the camp. The majority of the inexactitudes to be found in these texts are attributable to the confusion of the witnesses between what they have seen with their own eyes and what they have heard, during the period of their internment. With the passing of the years, then, to the memory of events they have experienced is added the reading of other works on the topic, with the result that the autobiographies in more recent times lose the immediacy of memory in favor of a more consistent and complete vision of the extermination process."

This is a perfect description of the witness Venezia. In his book there is a very obvious imprint of having "read other works on the topic," particularly—of fundamental importance—the album by David Olère,²⁷¹ but also of the testimonies of Miklos Nyiszli and Filip Müller, to which it is necessary to add the meetings with other self-proclaimed ex-members of the *Sonderkommando* and historians.²⁷² The photograph which appeared in 2002 in *Il Giornale*, and later in *Gente*²⁷³ as well, is revealing: in fact, it shows Venezia holding D. Olère's album in his hands, open to the page showing the drawing reproduced on p. 92 of *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*. At this point,

Venezia refers to Olère several times by name, and even claims to have met him:

"I didn't see any Frenchmen; otherwise I would have attempted to talk to them. David Olère, for example, I did not know that he had been deported from France; to me, he was a Pole who spoke Yiddish."

Venezia's narrative relating to the supposed extermination process is, in fact, essentially a disquisition on D. Olère's drawings, often mistakenly misinterpreted. The decision to publish many of these drawings in the volume, undoubtedly at the suggestion of his editors, is only apparently prudent, since it is intended to provide confirmation of Venezia's truthfulness; in reality, it was a blunder, because it makes it only too obvious that the narrative is simply based on the drawings. This is confirmed by the fact that the drawings show things which are obviously mistaken and which Venezia is incapable of correcting.

In his drawings, D. Olère, far from representing reality, has simply illustrated the propagandistic themes created by the Auschwitz resistance movement which circulated in the camp,²⁷⁴ including the most absurd legends, such as the flaming chimneys, which I discussed above, or that of the blue coloration of hydrocyanic acid!

In one of his color drawings, undated, depicting a gassing scene, a can of Zyklon B is in fact shown issuing blue vapors!²⁷⁵

This legend has been repeated, among others, by Venezia's cousin, Yakob Gabbai, who declared:²⁷⁶

"When he [an SS man] introduced the gas from above, the gas diffused [with vapors] that were blue in color. The material itself was in the form of blue cubes which melted in contact with the air and issued gas, which caused immediate suffocation."

Like all other ignorant people, they believed that "*Blausäure*" (hydrocyanic acid, literally, in German, blue acid) was blue or released blue vapors, while it is very well known that it is a colorless liquid;²⁷⁷ the porous wick impregnated with hydrocyanic acid to produce Zyklon-B, on the other hand, was well known to have consisted of white granules of diatomaceous earth.

Venezia openly brags of his quality as the "eye" witness:²⁷⁸

"Birkenau was a true hell, no one can understand or enter into the logic of the camp. That's why I want to tell what I can, entrusting myself only to my memories of what I am certain to have seen and nothing more."

But he cannot have seen unreal scenes, like fictitious picket fences, illusory Jewish transports, flaming chimneys, the imaginary recovery of human fat, non-existent rooms, fantastic cremations, etc.; nor can he have experienced implausible events, such as that of his “salvation.”

In conclusion, getting back to the analysis of V. Pisanty, it may be said that Venezia’s testimony is the fruit of a confabulation in Venezia’s mind between that which he actually saw, that which he heard about during his internment, and that which later came to be added, in his memory, to events he actually experienced, after reading other works on the subject, with the result that “the immediacy of memory has disappeared, in favor of a more consistent and complete vision of the supposed extermination process,” which is transformed into a historical romance.

But precisely for this reason, the historians who present him as “The Truth about the Gas Chambers” and “A Unique Testimony” can have no excuse and no justification – not even their atavistic ineptitude.²⁷⁹

Notes

Translated by Carlos Porter

Abbreviations Used in Notes:

AGK: Archiwum Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu – Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej (Archive of the Central Commission of Inquiry on Crimes against the Polish People – Memoriale Nazionale), Warsaw

APMO: Archiwum Państwowego Muzeum w Oświęcimiu (Archive of the Auschwitz State Museum), Auschwitz

GARF: Gosudarstvenni Archiv Rossiskoi Federatsii (State Archive of the Russian Federation), Moscow.

RGVA: Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennii Vojennii Archiv (Russian State War Archive), Moscow.

¹ In: *Olocausto: dilettanti a convegno*. Effepi Edizioni, Genoa, 2002, pp. 150-160.

² In: “Ragionamenti sui fatti e le immagini della storia.” *Mensile di Storia Illustrata*, June 1995, pp. 30-37.

³ Online at: <http://www.gliscritti.it/approf/shoa/shlomo/shlomo.htm>.

⁴ “Io, l’ultimo dei Sonderkommando addetti ai crematori di Auschwitz,” in: *Il Giornale*, 13 January 2002, pp. 1 and 16.

⁵ *Gente*, n. 41, 10 ottobre 2002, pp. 77-79.

⁶ C. Mattogno, *Olocausto: dilettanti a convegno*, op. cit., p. 150.

⁷ Rizzoli, Milan, 2007.

⁸ “Testimonianza tenuta a S. Melania il 18 gennaio 2001 in occasione della prima Giornata della memoria,” art. cit.

⁹ “La testimonianza di Salomone Venezia sopravvissuto dei sonderkommando,” art. cit., p. 37.

¹⁰ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, op. cit., pp. 176-177.

- ¹¹ "Io, ebreo, cremavo gli ebrei," art. cit., p. 77.
- ¹² G. Greif, *Wir weinten tränenlos... Augenzeugenberichte der jüdischen "Sonderkommandos" in Auschwitz*. Böhlau Verlag, Cologne, Weimar, Vienna, 1985, pp. 125-166. Here he introduces himself under the name Jaacov Gabai.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 1-48. He lists the Venezia brothers on p. 9.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 220-255. Shlomo Venezia is mentioned on p. 245.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 256-285.
- ¹⁶ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, op. cit., p. 68.
- ¹⁷ Liliana Picciotto Fargion, *Il libro della memoria. Gli ebrei deportati dall'Italia (1943-1945)*. Mursia, Milan, 1991, p. 599.
- ¹⁸ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, op. cit., p. 19.
- ¹⁹ Danuta Czech, *Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz-Birkenau 1939-1945*. Rowohlt Verlag, Reinbek bei Hamburg, 1989, p. 754.
- ²⁰ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, op. cit., p. 52.
- ²¹ G. Greif, *Wir weinten tränenlos...*, op. cit., p. 130.
- ²² *Ibid.*, p. 129.
- ²³ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, op. cit., p. 52.
- ²⁴ The so-called old ramp (a wooden platform) in which the transports were unloaded was located a few hundred meters from Birkenau Camp.
- ²⁵ G. Greif, *Wir weinten tränenlos...*, op. cit., p. 129.
- ²⁶ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, op. cit., p. 58.
- ²⁷ G. Greif, *Wir weinten tränenlos...*, op. cit., p. 130.
- ²⁸ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, op. cit., p. 52.
- ²⁹ "Wassermannsche Reaktion": a chemical reaction identifying the organism responsible for causing syphilis; discovered by the bacteriologist August Wassermann (1866-1925).
- ³⁰ "Gonorrhöe," gonorrhea.
- ³¹ Quarterly report of SS-Lagerarzt of Auschwitz I Concentration Camp to the SS-WVHA, Amt DIII, dated 16 December 1943. GARF, 7121-108-32, pp. 95-96.
- ³² *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, op. cit., pp. 66-67.
- ³³ Irena Strzelecka, "Das Quarantänelager für männliche Häftlinge in Birkenau (BIIa)," in: *Hefte von Auschwitz*. Verlag Staatliches Auschwitz-Museum, 1997, p. 71, 73 and 115.
- ³⁴ Letter from Bischoff to Wirths dated 4 August 1943 with subject "Hygienische Sofortmassnahmen im KGL: Erstellung von Leichenhallen in jedem Unterabschnitt." RGVA, 502-1-170, p. 262.
- ³⁵ Letter from Wirths to Höss dated 25 May 1944 with the object "Bau von Leichenkammern im KL Auschwitz II." RGVA, 502-1-170, p. 264. For a more detailed discussion of this matter, please see my study, "The Morgues of the Crematoria at Birkenau in the Light of Documents," in: *The Revisionist*, vol. 2, n. 3, August 2004, pp. 271-294.
- ³⁶ "Io, l'ultimo dei Sonderkommando addetti ai crematori di Auschwitz," art. cit.
- ³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 94.
- ³⁸ "La testimonianza di Salomone Venezia sopravvissuto dei sonderkommando," art. cit., p. 34.
- ³⁹ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, op. cit., p. 105.

- ⁴⁰ See, for example, the inmate lists, complete with names and registration numbers, which I published on pp. 169-172 of my study *The Central Construction Office of the Waffen-SS and Police Auschwitz*. Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago 2005.
- ⁴¹ G. Greif, *Wir weinten tränenlos...*, *op. cit.*, p. 130.
- ⁴² *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, pp. 68-69.
- ⁴³ "Io, l'ultimo dei Sonderkommando addetti ai crematori di Auschwitz," *art. cit.*
- ⁴⁴ G. Greif, *Wir weinten tränenlos...*, *op. cit.*, p. 130.
- ⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 9.
- ⁴⁶ See, in this regard, my study *La deportazione degli ebrei ungheresi del maggio 1944*. Un bilancio provvisorio. Effepi, Genova, 2007, p. 47.
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 228.
- ⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 265.
- ⁴⁹ *Quarantäne-Liste*. APMO, D-AuII-3/1, p. 5.
- ⁵⁰ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, p. 72.
- ⁵¹ F. Müller, *Sonderbehandlung. Drei Jahre in den Krematorien und Gaskammern von Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, p. 236.
- ⁵² Second and official version, the "*Sonderkommando*" era alloggiato nel Block 13 del campo BIId.
- ⁵³ The witness refers to the supposed morgue in Camp BIIda.
- ⁵⁴ "La testimonianza di Salomone Venezia sopravvissuto dei sonderkommando," *art. cit.*, p. 35.
- ⁵⁵ *L'Album d'Auschwitz*. Editions du Seuil, Parigi, 1983, p. 177.
- ⁵⁶ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, p. 120.
- ⁵⁷ The street name is also found in "Pianta di Birkenau" [Diagram of Birkenau] published on 56-57 of Venezia's book.
- ⁵⁸ *L'Album d'Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, photograph 152 on p. 176 e 174-189, pp. 194-205. In this regard, see my study *La deportazione degli ebrei ungheresi del May 1944*. Un bilancio provvisorio, *op. cit.*, pp. 36-38 e 66-67.
- ⁵⁹ F. Müller, *Drei Jahre in den Krematorien und Gaskammern von Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, 1979, p. 200.
- ⁶⁰ See diagram 936 of Crematorium II (and III) dated 15 January 1942 in: J.-C. Pressac, *Auschwitz: Technique and Operation of the Gas Chambers*. The Beate Klarsfeld Foundation, New York, 1989, pp. 268-269. See also the photograph of the Crematorium III published in *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, p. 73.
- ⁶¹ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, pp. 72-73.
- ⁶² *Testimoni della catastrofe. Depositioni di prigionieri del Sonderkommando ebraico di Auschwitz-Birkenau (1945)*, *op. cit.*, pp. 66-67.
- ⁶³ F. Müller, *Drei Jahre in den Krematorien und Gaskammern von Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, p. 287, diagram of Crematorium II/III (erroneously indicated as IV/V), room 12.
- ⁶⁴ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, p. 99.
- ⁶⁵ D. Czech, *Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz-Birkenau 1939-1945*, *op. cit.*, p. 764.
- ⁶⁶ See § 13.
- ⁶⁷ D. Czech, *Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz-Birkenau 1939-1945*, *op. cit.*, p. 773.

- ⁶⁸ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, p. 66.
- ⁶⁹ As I have mentioned, the first transports from Hungary arrived at Auschwitz on 17 May.
- ⁷⁰ G. Greif, *Wir weinten tränenlos...*, *op. cit.*, pp. 130-131.
- ⁷¹ "Io, l'ultimo dei Sonderkommando addetti ai crematori di Auschwitz," *art. cit.*
- ⁷² C. Mattogno, *The Bunkers of Auschwitz. Black Propaganda versus History*. Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago, 2004.
- ⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 75.
- ⁷⁴ D. Czech, *Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz-Birkenau 1939-1945*, *op. cit.*, p. 769.
- ⁷⁵ F. Müller, *Sonderbehandlung. Drei Jahre in den Krematorien und Gaskammern von Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, p. 198.
- ⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 200.
- ⁷⁷ C. Mattogno, *The Bunkers of Auschwitz. Black Propaganda versus History*, *op. cit.*, p. 210.
- ⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 220.
- ⁷⁹ Nevertheless, the bodies in the "Leichenkeller" were in a state of decomposition "due to the heat." See Section 4, page 74. In the same way, during the evacuation on open wagons, in January 1945, when the cold was "intolerable"—at least 20 degrees below zero, reports Primo Levi (*Se questo è un uomo*. Einaudi, Torino, 1984, p. 196)—one dead body in Venezia's wagon "began to stink terribly" after one day.
- ⁸⁰ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, p. 199.
- ⁸¹ F. Müller, *Sonderbehandlung. Drei Jahre in den Krematorien und Gaskammern von Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, p. 212.
- ⁸² *Testimoni della catastrofe. Deposizioni di priogionieri del Sonderkommando ebraico di Auschwitz-Birkenau (1945)*, *op. cit.*, p. 45.
- ⁸³ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, pp. 56-57. The cottage renamed "Bunker 2" was located outside the camp, about 200 m west of the *Zentralsauna*.
- ⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 74.
- ⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 76.
- ⁸⁶ On the contradictory and nonsensical declarations of Sz. Dragon, including those made to the Soviets, see my study *The Bunkers of Auschwitz. Black Propaganda versus History*, *op. cit.*, pp. 71-83.
- ⁸⁷ *Testimoni della catastrofe. Deposizioni di priogionieri del Sonderkommando ebraico di Auschwitz-Birkenau (1945)*, *op. cit.*, p. 42.
- ⁸⁸ C. Mattogno, *The Bunkers of Auschwitz. Black Propaganda versus History*, *op. cit.*, pp. 106-110 and document 15 and p. 210, which reproduces a diagram of "Bunker 5" executed by the witness in which the caption says "dach kryty słomą," "roof covered with straw."
- ⁸⁹ *Testimoni della catastrofe. Deposizioni di priogionieri del Sonderkommando ebraico di Auschwitz-Birkenau (1945)*, *op. cit.*, p. 54.
- ⁹⁰ C. Mattogno, *The Bunkers of Auschwitz. Black Propaganda versus History*, *op. cit.*, pp. 88-92.
- ⁹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 106-110 and 210-211.
- ⁹² *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

- ⁹³ "Testimony made to S. Melania on 18 January 2001 on the occasion of the First Day of Memory," art. cit.
- ⁹⁴ See in this regard, my study *Auschwitz: Open Air Incinerations*. Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago, 2005, pp. 13-23.
- ⁹⁵ J.-C. Pressac, *Auschwitz: Technique and Operation of the Gas Chambers*, op. cit., p. 171.
- ⁹⁶ G. Greif, *Wir weinten tränenlos...*, op. cit., pp. 9-10.
- ⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 10.
- ⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 228.
- ⁹⁹ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 229.
- ¹⁰¹ An homage to the legend of the fantastic combustibility of women's bodies is expressed as follows by H. Tauber: "The bodies of the women burned better and more quickly than those of the men. For this reason, they looked for the body of a woman, when a load burned badly, to put it in the oven and accelerate the incineration." *Testimoni della catastrofe. Deposizioni di prigionieri del Sonderkommando ebraico di Auschwitz-Birkenau (1945)*, op. cit., p. 76.
- ¹⁰² G. Greif, *Wir weinten tränenlos...*, op. cit., pp. 266-267.
- ¹⁰³ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, op. cit., p. 78.
- ¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 74.
- ¹⁰⁵ M. Nyiszli, *Auschwitz. A Doctor's Eyewitness Account*. Fawcett Crest, New York, 1961, pp. 69-70.
- ¹⁰⁶ G. Greif, *Wir weinten tränenlos...*, op. cit., p. 267.
- ¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 229.
- ¹⁰⁸ C. Mattogno, *Auschwitz: Open Air Incinerations*, op. cit., pp. 43-68.
- ¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 33-34. See also my article "Cremation Pits and Ground Water Levels at Birkenau," *The Revisionist* Vol. 1, Number 1, February 2003, pp. 13-16.
- ¹¹⁰ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, op. cit., p. 80.
- ¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 223, note 18.
- ¹¹² But at the Auschwitz trial, F. Müller mentioned only "two big pits" ("zwei große Gruben"). Bernd Naum, *Auschwitz. Bericht über die Strafsache gegen Mulka u. a. vor dem Schwurgericht Frankfurt*. Athäneum Verlag, Frankfurt am Main/Bonn, 1965, p. 334.
- ¹¹³ C. Mattogno, *Auschwitz: Open Air Incinerations*, op. cit., pp. 13-23.
- ¹¹⁴ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, op. cit., p. 100.
- ¹¹⁵ C. Mattogno, *Auschwitz: Open Air Incinerations*, op. cit., documents 23-28, pp. 106-111.
- ¹¹⁶ F. Müller, *Sonderbehandlung. Drei Jahre in den Krematorien und Gaskammern von Auschwitz*, op. cit., pp. 207, 211.
- ¹¹⁷ "Io, l'ultimo dei Sonderkommando addetti ai crematori di Auschwitz," art. cit.
- ¹¹⁸ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, op. cit., p. 77.
- ¹¹⁹ F. Müller, *Sonderbehandlung. Drei Jahre in den Krematorien und Gaskammern von Auschwitz*, op. cit., pp. 207-208.
- ¹²⁰ C. Mattogno, "Verbrennungsexperimente mit Tierfleisch und Tierfett. Zur Frage der Grubenverbrennungen in den angeblichen Vernichtungslagern des 3. Reiches," in: *Vierteljahresshefte für freie Geschichtsforschung*, Year 7, no. 2, July 2003, pp. 185-194.

- ¹²¹ See § 6.
- ¹²² A nonsensical or purely speculative claim, since Crematoria II and III had the same design.
- ¹²³ “Io, ebreo, cremavo gli ebrei,” art. cit., p. 77.
- ¹²⁴ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, op. cit., p. 80.
- ¹²⁵ For example, the Erläuterungsbericht zum Ausbau des Kriegesgefangenenlagers der Waffen-SS in Auschwitz O.S. dated 30 September 1943. RGVA, 502-2-60, p. 81.
- ¹²⁶ For example, the Kostenvoranschlag zum Ausbau des Kriegesgefangenenlagers der Waffen-SS in Auschwitz dated 1 October 1943. RGVA, 502-2-60, pp. 89-90.
- ¹²⁷ For example, that of Crematorium II, dated 31 March 1943. RGVA, 502-2-54, p. 77.
- ¹²⁸ M. Nyiszli, *Auschwitz. A Doctor's Eyewitness Account*, op. cit., p. 45.
- ¹²⁹ F. Müller, *Sonderbehandlung. Drei Jahre in den Krematorien und Gaskammern von Auschwitz*, op. cit., p. 96.
- ¹³⁰ *Processo Höss*, vol. 2, pp. 99-100.
- ¹³¹ G. Greif, *Wir weinten tränenlos...*, op. cit., p. 33.
- ¹³² “Protokolle des Todes,” in: *Der Spiegel*, n. 40/1993, p. 162.
- ¹³³ *Testimoni della catastrofe. Deposizioni di prigionieri del Sonderkommando ebraico di Auschwitz-Birkenau (1945)*, p. 65.
- ¹³⁴ G. Greif, *Wir weinten tränenlos...*, op. cit., p. 237.
- ¹³⁵ *The Buchenwald Report*. Translated, edited and with an introduction by David A. Hackett. Westview Press. Boulder, San Francisco, Oxford, 1995, p. 168.
- ¹³⁶ Gerald Fleming, *Hitler und die Endlösung*. Limes Verlag, Wiesbaden and Munich, 1982, p. 204.
- ¹³⁷ “La testimonianza di Salomone Venezia sopravvissuto dei sonderkommando,” art. cit., p. 35.
- ¹³⁸ “Testimonianza tenuta a S. Melania il 18 gennaio 2001 in occasione della prima Giornata della memoria,” art. cit.
- ¹³⁹ RGVA, 502-2-54, pp. 77-78.
- ¹⁴⁰ *Bauabschnitt II*, Construction Sector II.
- ¹⁴¹ RGVA, 502-1-83, p. 311.
- ¹⁴² For more detailed information on the matter, please see my study entitled “The Morgues of the Crematoria at Birkenau in the Light of Documents.”
- ¹⁴³ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, op. cit., p. 85.
- ¹⁴⁴ “La testimonianza di Salomone Venezia sopravvissuto dei sonderkommando,” art. cit., p. 35.
- ¹⁴⁵ “Testimonianza tenuta a S. Melania il 18 gennaio 2001 in occasione della prima Giornata della memoria,” art. cit.
- ¹⁴⁶ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, op. cit., p. 89.
- ¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 82.
- ¹⁴⁸ J.-C. Pressac, *Auschwitz: Technique and Operation of the Gas Chambers*, op. cit., p. 50, 232 and 486.
- ¹⁴⁹ I have explained the function of this door and the area (the Leichenkeller 1) in the article already cited, “The Morgues of the Crematoria at Birkenau in the Light of Documents.”

- ¹⁵⁰ J.-C. Pressac, *Auschwitz: Technique and Operation of the Gas Chambers*, op. cit., p. 436.
- ¹⁵¹ *Testimoni della catastrofe. Deposizioni di prigionieri del Sonderkommando ebraico di Auschwitz-Birkenau (1945)*, op. cit., p. 82.
- ¹⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 65.
- ¹⁵³ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, op. cit., p. 87.
- ¹⁵⁴ F. Müller, *Sonderbehandlung. Drei Jahre in den Krematorien und Gaskammern von Auschwitz*, op. cit., p. 183.
- ¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 131. Venezia later forgot about him, writing: "A Jewish doctor who was a member of the Sonderkommando told me that it was necessary to lance it to get rid of the pus" (p. 143). But this "Jewish doctor" was precisely M. Nyiszli.
- ¹⁵⁶ SDG stands for *Sanitätsdienstgrade*, name of the SS nurses from the health service.
- ¹⁵⁷ M. Nyiszli claims that the supposed gas chamber, a room 30 meters long, had a length of 200 meters. M. Nyiszli, *Auschwitz. A Doctor's Eyewitness Account*, op. cit., p. 44-45.
- ¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 39.
- ¹⁵⁹ *Testimoni della catastrofe. Deposizioni di prigionieri del Sonderkommando ebraico di Auschwitz-Birkenau (1945)*, op. cit., p. 74.
- ¹⁶⁰ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, op. cit., p. 87.
- ¹⁶¹ *Testimoni della catastrofe. Deposizioni di prigionieri del Sonderkommando ebraico di Auschwitz-Birkenau (1945)*, op. cit., p. 66.
- ¹⁶² *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, op. cit., p. 87.
- ¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 83.
- ¹⁶⁴ M. Nyiszli, *Auschwitz. A Doctor's Eyewitness Account*, op. cit., pp. 46. This fantastic story has also been borrowed, in large part, and with brash plagiarism, by F. Müller [*i.e.*, prior to Venezia, Müller already stole the same tale]. Cfr. C. Mattogno, *Auschwitz: A Case of Plagiarism*. In: *The Journal of Historical Review*, vol.10, n.1, Spring 1990.
- ¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 39.
- ¹⁶⁶ Chlorine, with respect to air, at 0°C, has a density of 2.49.
- ¹⁶⁷ G. Wellers, who died in 1991, was the director of a research laboratory at the Faculty of Medicine of Paris from 1956 and Advisor to the Dean of the Faculty from 1968 to 1974.
- ¹⁶⁸ G. Wellers, "Die zwei Giftgase," in: *Nationalsozialistische Massentötungen durch Giftgas. Eine Dokumentation*. By Eugen Kogon, Hermann Langbein, Adalbert Rückerl and others. S. Fischer Verlag, Frankfurt am Main, 1983, p. 283.
- ¹⁶⁹ See in this regard my study, "The Elusive Holes of Death," which I have already cited.
- ¹⁷⁰ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, op. cit., p. 89.
- ¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 93.
- ¹⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 77. See § 7.
- ¹⁷³ F. Müller, *Sonderbehandlung. Drei Jahre in den Krematorien und Gaskammern von Auschwitz*, op. cit., p. 186.
- ¹⁷⁴ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, op. cit., p. 95.

- ¹⁷⁵ G. Greif, *Wir weinten tränenlos...*, *op. cit.*, p. 269.
- ¹⁷⁶ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, p. 81.
- ¹⁷⁷ M. Nyszli, *Auschwitz. A Doctor's Eyewitness Account*, *op. cit.*, p. 47.
- ¹⁷⁸ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, p. 91.
- ¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁸⁰ See document 1.
- ¹⁸¹ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, p. 91.
- ¹⁸² J.-C. Pressac, *Le macchine dello sterminio. Auschwitz 1941-1945*. Feltrinelli, Milan, 1994, document 25 outside the text.
- ¹⁸³ As deduced from the relationship with the opening of the freight elevator, which was 2.10 meters long.
- ¹⁸⁴ *Aktenvermerk* di Kirschnek dated 25 March 1943. APMO, BW 30/25, p. 8.
- ¹⁸⁵ Letter from Topf to the Zentralbauleitung dated 30 September 1942. APMO, BW 30/34, p.114 and BW 30/27, p. 30.
- ¹⁸⁶ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, p. 98.
- ¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 96.
- ¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 100.
- ¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 85.
- ¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 88.
- ¹⁹¹ The orthography is uncertain: F. Piper gives the variants Gorges, Gorger, Goger and Gorgies.
- ¹⁹² *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, 106.
- ¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 105.
- ¹⁹⁴ F. Müller, *Sonderbehandlung. Drei Jahre in den Krematorien und Gaskammern von Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, p. 147.
- ¹⁹⁵ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, p. 127. Here, the relative is the cousin of the father, Léon Venezia.
- ¹⁹⁶ M. Nyszli, *Auschwitz. A Doctor's Eyewitness Account*, *op. cit.*, pp. 88-92.
- ¹⁹⁷ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, pp. 129-130.
- ¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 91.
- ¹⁹⁹ See document 1.
- ²⁰⁰ See document 2.
- ²⁰¹ *Testimoni della catastrofe. Deposizioni di prigionieri del Sonderkommando ebraico di Auschwitz-Birkenau (1945)*, *op. cit.*, p. 75.
- ²⁰² *Ibid.*
- ²⁰³ "La testimonianza di Salomone Venezia sopravvissuto dei sonderkommando," *art. cit.*, p. 36.
- ²⁰⁴ M. Nyszli, *Auschwitz. A Doctor's Eyewitness Account*, *op. cit.*, p. 48.
- ²⁰⁵ "Io, l'ultimo dei Sonderkommando addetti ai crematori di Auschwitz," *art. cit.*; "Io, ebreo, cremavo gli ebrei," *art. cit.*, p. 79.
- ²⁰⁶ "Io, ebreo, cremavo gli ebrei," *art. cit.*, p. 77.
- ²⁰⁷ Lorenzo Fazzini, "Il caso. Dopo la conferenza di Teheran sull'Olocausto, parla l'unico sopravvissuto del Sonderkommando di Auschwitz vivente in Italia," in: http://www.db.avvenire.it/avvenire/edizione_2007_01_03/agora.html.
- ²⁰⁸ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, p. 102.
- ²⁰⁹ G. Greif, *Wir weinten tränenlos...*, *op. cit.*, p. 131.
- ²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 40-41.

- ²¹¹ Interrogation of K. Prüfer on 5 March 1946; interrogation of K. Schultze of 4 March 1946. See J. Graf, "Anatomie der sowjetischen Befragung der Topf-Ingenieure. Die Verhöre von Fritz Sander, Kurt Prüfer, Karl Schultze und Gustav Braun durch Offiziere der sowjetischen Antispionageorganisation Smersch (1946/1948)," in: *Vierteljahreshefte für freie Geschichtsforschung*, Year 6, No. 4, December 2002, pp. 404 and 413-414.
- ²¹² In this regard, see my study *Le camere a gas di Auschwitz*. Effepi, Genova, 2009, Chapter 8, pp. 210-294; See also "The Crematoria Ovens of Auschwitz and Birkenau," in: *Dissecting the Holocaust. The Growing Critique of "Truth" and "Memory."* By Ernst Gauss [Germar Rudolf]. Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago, 2003, pp. 373-412.
- ²¹³ "Io, ebreo, cremavo gli ebrei," art. cit., p. 78.
- ²¹⁴ J.A. Topf & Söhne, *Betriebsvorschrift des koksbeheizten Topf-Doppelmuffel-Einäscherungssofen*, 26 September 1941. APMO, BW 11/1/3, pp. 2-3; J.A. Topf & Söhne, *Betriebsvorschrift des koksbeheizten Topf-Dreimuffel-Einäscherungssofen*. March 1943, in: J.-C. Pressac, *Auschwitz: Technique and Operation of the Gas Chambers*, op. cit., p. 222.
- ²¹⁵ J. Sehn, *Oświęcim-Brzezinka (Auschwitz-Birkenau) Concentration Camp*. Wydawnictwo Prawnicze, Varsavia, 1961, p. 137.
- ²¹⁶ J.-C. Pressac, *Auschwitz: Technique and Operation of the Gas Chambers*, op. cit., p. 224, facsimile of the document.
- ²¹⁷ "La testimonianza di Salomone Venezia sopravvissuto dei sonderkommando," art. cit., pp. 36-37.
- ²¹⁸ F. Müller, *Sonderbehandlung. Drei Jahre in den Krematorien und Gaskammern von Auschwitz*, op. cit., p. 212.
- ²¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 211.
- ²²⁰ C. Mattogno, *Auschwitz: Open Air Incinerations*, op. cit., pp. 101-107.
- ²²¹ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, op. cit., p. 93.
- ²²² F. Müller, *Sonderbehandlung. Drei Jahre in den Krematorien und Gaskammern von Auschwitz*, op. cit., p. 222. The transport of the ashes was performed "mit Schubkarren," with wheelbarrows.
- ²²³ "La testimonianza di Salomone Venezia sopravvissuto dei sonderkommando," art. cit., p. 34.
- ²²⁴ C. Mattogno, "Flammen und Rauch aus Krematoriumskaminen," in: *Vierteljahreshefte für freie Geschichtsforschung*, anno 7, n. 3-4, December 2003, pp. 386-391.
- ²²⁵ "Io, l'ultimo dei Sonderkommando addetti ai crematori di Auschwitz," art. cit.
- ²²⁶ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, op. cit., p. 84.
- ²²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 94.
- ²²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 31.
- ²²⁹ Letter from Bauleiter del Lager II to the Kommandantur des K.L.II Birkenau, dated 9 May 1944. RGVA, 502-1-83, p. 377.
- ²³⁰ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, op. cit., pp. 107-108.
- ²³¹ F. Müller, *Sonderbehandlung. Drei Jahre in den Krematorien und Gaskammern von Auschwitz*, op. cit., p. 134.
- ²³² "Io, l'ultimo dei Sonderkommando addetti ai crematori di Auschwitz," art. cit.
- ²³³ M. Nyiszli, *Auschwitz. A Doctor's Eyewitness Account*, op. cit., pp. 59-60.

- ²³⁴ *Testimoni della catastrofe. Deposizioni di priogionieri del Sonderkommando ebraico di Auschwitz-Birkenau (1945)*, *op. cit.*, note 12 on p. 16.
- ²³⁵ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, p. 105.
- ²³⁶ C. Mattogno, *Auschwitz: Open Air Incinerations*, *op. cit.*, pp. 80-89, summary of the manpower strength of the crematoria.
- ²³⁷ On this event, no German documents exist.
- ²³⁸ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, p. 140.
- ²³⁹ I follow the official version published by F. Piper in W. Długoborski and F. Piper (authors), *Auschwitz 1940-1945. Studien zur Geschichte des Konzentrations- und Vernichtungslagers Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, volume III, pp. 221-224.
- ²⁴⁰ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, p. 139.
- ²⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 147.
- ²⁴² W. Długoborski and F. Piper (authors), *Auschwitz 1940-1945. Studien zur Geschichte des Konzentrations- und Vernichtungslagers Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, vol. III, p. 224.
- ²⁴³ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, p. 70.
- ²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 112-113.
- ²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 147-148.
- ²⁴⁶ AGK, 131-12.
- ²⁴⁷ Wacław Lipka (n. 2520), Mieczysław Morawa (n. 9730), Józef Ilczuk (n. 14916), Władysław Biskup (n. 74501) and Jan Agrestowski (no. 74545).
- ²⁴⁸ Facsimile of the original document in: *Inmitten des grauenvollen Verbrechens. Handschriften von Mitgliedern des Sonderkommandos*. Hefte von Auschwitz, Sonderheft (I), Oświęcim, 1972, p. 44.
- ²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 50-51, facsimile of the original document.
- ²⁵⁰ Het Nederlandsche Roode Kruis. Auschwitz. Deel V: De deportatietransporten in 1944. Uitgave van het hoofdbestuur van de vereniging het Nederlandsche Roode Kruis. 's-Gravenhage, 1953, p. 85
- ²⁵¹ Not a very clever idea: if he had said "Benezia," the employees assigned to the registration could have misunderstood him and written, precisely, "Venezia"! Thus, since it is a well-known practice that the Jews "once they arrived in Italy, took the name of the city in which they lived" (*Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, p. 17) and since the name of the city of Venice is known to everyone, the employees in question would certainly have understood, precisely, "Venezia."
- ²⁵² *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, p. 153.
- ²⁵³ At Auschwitz, the lists regarding the inmates bore, above all, the registration number, then the family name and given name.
- ²⁵⁴ "Io, l'ultimo dei Sonderkommando addetti ai crematori di Auschwitz," *art. cit.*
- ²⁵⁵ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, p. 176.
- ²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 142.
- ²⁵⁷ D. Czech, *Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz-Birkenau 1939-1945*, *op. cit.*, p. 939.
- ²⁵⁸ RGVA, 502-1-67, p. 227.
- ²⁵⁹ D. Czech, *Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz-Birkenau 1939-1945*, *op. cit.*, 962.
- ²⁶⁰ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

- ²⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 140.
- ²⁶² The structures of *Leichenkeller* 1 which most stood out were the seven concrete pillars measuring 40 x 40 cm, which supported a heavy concrete beam which traversed the centre of the area along its entire length.
- ²⁶³ Venezia expresses his thanks “to all the historians, researchers, teachers and students” he has met, “in particular, those who, in one way or another, have contributed to this book: Marcello Pezzetti, Umberto Gentiloni, Béatrice Prasquier, Maddalena Carli and Sara Berger.” *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, 179.
- ²⁶⁴ For example, that which Venezia indicated beforehand as “Section A” (“La testimonianza di Salomone Venezia sopravvissuto dei sonderkommando,” *art. cit.*, p. 34), becomes, correctly, Section BIIa.
- ²⁶⁵ By this, he means the terms relating to the installations of functions of the camp.
- ²⁶⁶ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, pp. 221-223.
- ²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 181-205.
- ²⁶⁸ On this, see my article, “Marcello Pezzetti, ‘Esperto Mondiale’ su Auschwitz,” in: *Olocausto: dilettanti a convegno*, *op. cit.*, pp.93-117.
- ²⁶⁹ A diagram of Birkenau (pp. XLIV-XLV) similar to that published in the book by Venezia (pp. 56-57), the photograph of Crematorium III, p. L (*Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, p. 73) and open-air cremation, p. XLVIII (*Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, p. 80), in addition to the seven drawings by D.Olère, which appear, in Venezia’s book, on pp. 76, 82, 84,86, 88, 90, 92, reproduced respectively on pp. 66, 240, 13, 17, 90, 274 and 143.
- ²⁷⁰ V. Pisanty, *L’irritante questione delle camere a gas. Logica del negazionismo*, Bompiani, Milan, 1998, p. 183.
- ²⁷¹ S. Klarsfeld (editor), *David Olère. A Painter in the Sonderkommando at Auschwitz*. The Beate Klarsfeld Foundation, New York, 1989.
- ²⁷² In the same book, there appear photographs of Venezia with Avraham Dragon, “ex-member of the Sonderkommando,” with Lemke Pliszko (*ibid.*) and with “the historian Marcello Pezzetti” at Birkenau. *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, p. 71,104 and 177.
- ²⁷³ In this review, there also appears another photograph which shows Venezia with the same album, but open to the drawing of the crematorium with the flaming chimney. “*Io, ebreo, cremavo gli ebrei*,” *art. cit.*, p. 79.
- ²⁷⁴ See, in this regard, my study *Auschwitz: 27 gennaio 1945 – 27 gennaio 2005: sessant’anni di propaganda*. I Quaderni di Auschwitz, 5. Effepi, Genoa, 2005. Revised and extended version at: <https://codoh.com/library/document/auschwitz-27-gennaio-1945-27-gennaio-2005-sessantanni-di-propaganda/>.
- ²⁷⁵ S. Klarsfeld (editor), *David Olère. A Painter in the Sonderkommando at Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, p. 54.
- ²⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 141.
- ²⁷⁷ An official questionnaire intended for civilian disinfection personnel states: “Q.: Does hydrocyanic acid have a definite color? A.- No, hydrocyanic acid is colorless, whether in liquid or gaseous form. D.: Then why is it called *Blausäure* [= blue acid]? R.: Because it was originally produced from Prussian

blue.” O. Lenz, L. Gassner, *Schädlingsbekämpfung mit hochgiftigen Stoffen, Heft 1: Blausäure*. Verlagsbuchhandlung von Richard Schoetz, Berlin, 1934, p. 15

²⁷⁸ *Sonderkommando Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, pp. 75-77.

²⁷⁹ E. Friedler, B. Siebert, A. Kilian (authors), *Zeugen aus der Todeszone. Das jüdische Sonderkommando in Auschwitz*. Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, Munich, 2005. The multiple references to Venezia are taken from an interview which he granted to Friedler and Kilian on 3 December 2000, and concern quite marginal anecdotes.

The Non-Jewish Stake in the Holocaust Myth: Why the Continued Success of a Failed Ideology?

Paul Grubach

The Enigma Surrounding the Holocaust Doctrine

During the past four decades mainstream historians have made some surprising admissions with regard to the traditional Holocaust story, the alleged premeditated mass murder of six million Jews by the Germans during WWII, mainly with the use of “gas chambers.” Let us review some of them.

Holocaust historian Leon Poliakov pointed out in the late 1970s that there are no documents to prove that the Nazis ever had any plan to murder the Jews of Europe. He wrote:¹

“[T]he campaign to exterminate the Jews, as regards its conception as well as many other essential aspects, remains shrouded in darkness. Inferences, psychological considerations, and third- or fourth-hand reports enable us to reconstruct its development with considerable accuracy. Certain details, however, must remain forever unknown. The three or four people chiefly involved in the actual drawing up of the plan for total extermination are dead and no documents have survived; perhaps none ever existed.”

In short, the “evidence” that “proves” the existence of an alleged Nazi plan to exterminate the Jews is simply the guesswork of Holocaust historians. Hard documentary proof is missing.

The late Holocaust historian Lucy Dawidowicz would presumably concur with Poliakov. In her *The War against the Jews: 1933-1945*, she revealed how weak and flimsy the evidence that supports the traditional view of the Final Solution (the alleged premeditated Nazi plan to exterminate the Jews) really is. Dawidowicz admitted “the abundant documents of the German dictatorship have yielded no written order by Hitler to murder the Jews[...]² Even more importantly, she conceded there is no documentary evidence to prove her orthodox version of the Final Solution:³

“If Mein Kampf is the terminus ad quem for the conception of the Final Solution, does its beginning indeed go back to November 1918, as Hitler himself claimed? It is a hazardous task to construct a chronology of the evolution of this idea in Hitler’s mind. The historical evidence is

sparse and no doubt would be inadmissible as courtroom evidence. The very idea of the destruction of the Jews as a political goal demanded, when Hitler first began to advocate it, camouflage and concealment. Its later consummation demanded, within limits, secrecy. Consequently, there is a paucity of documents, and even those we have handicap the search for definitive evidence because of the problem of esoteric language."

So there you have it. The evidence for the orthodox view of the Final Solution would be inadmissible as courtroom evidence. Nevertheless, in many European countries, courts send people to prison for questioning this orthodoxy!

Two crucially important pieces of "evidence" for the traditional view of the Holocaust are the testimonies of SS Lieut.-Colonel Adolf Eichmann (Head of the Jewish Office of the Gestapo, 1940-45) and former Auschwitz Commandant Rudolf Höss. Christopher Browning, widely considered to be one of the foremost academic experts on the National Socialist Final Solution, admitted that both Eichmann and Höss are unreliable witnesses. Hidden in a footnote of his magnum opus, we learn that "the testimonies of especially Höss and to some extent Eichmann are confused, contradictory, self-serving, and not credible."⁴ In a 2003 collection of essays, he pointed out Eichmann's testimonials, traditionally considered to be a pillar of the Holocaust story, "contain calculated lies for legal defense."⁵

At the first, high-profile Holocaust trial of Revisionist publisher Ernst Zündel in Toronto in 1985, the premier Holocaust historian, the late Raul Hilberg, admitted that scientific proof for the existence of the "Hitler gas chambers" is missing. No authentic and genuine autopsy report exists to show that Jews were killed with poison gas.⁶ Furthermore, no one has ever produced any photographs of Jews being gassed. Just three years later in 1988, Princeton historian Arno Mayer admitted that the evidence supporting the existence of the "Hitler gas chambers" is scant and untrustworthy. In his own words:⁷

"Sources for the study of the gas chambers are at once rare and unreliable."

In his 2008 collection of essays on the Nazi Final Solution and the Holocaust, a British authority on Germany's Third Reich, Professor Ian Kershaw, was just one step away from admitting that credible evidence supporting the "Nazi gas chamber" story is non-existent. The academic historian pointed out:⁸

“Recorded comments about the murder of Jews refer almost invariably to mass shootings by the Einsatzgruppen [anti-guerilla warfare units of the German army], which in many cases were directly witnessed by members of the Wehrmacht [German armed forces]. The gassing, both in mobile gas-units and then in extermination camps, was carried out much more secretly, and found little echo inside Germany to go by the almost complete absence of documentary sources relating to it.”

Holocaust historian Robert Jan van Pelt conceded that the wartime claims that Jews were electrocuted en masse in “electrocution chambers” at the Belzec concentration camp and on “electric conveyor belts” at Auschwitz are falsehoods.⁹ If the evidence that “proves” that Jews were electrocuted en masse is bogus, isn’t it also possible that the “evidence” that “proves” that Jews were murdered in “gas chambers” is also bogus, or at least very suspect?

In early 2010, Professor van Pelt made another eyebrow-raising admission. He stated that there is no physical evidence to prove ninety nine percent of what is known about the alleged Auschwitz extermination camp story.¹⁰

At the postwar Nuremberg Tribunal, the Allies declared that the Germans exterminated four million people at the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp. Until 1990, a memorial plaque at Auschwitz read:¹¹

“Four Million People Suffered and Died Here at the Hands of the Nazi Murderers Between the Years 1940 and 1945.”

During a June 1979 visit to the camp, Pope John Paul II stood before this memorial and prayed for and blessed the alleged four million victims.¹²

In July 1990, the Polish government’s Auschwitz State Museum, along with Israel’s Yad Vashem Holocaust center, conceded that the four million figure was a gross exaggeration, and references to it were accordingly removed from the Auschwitz monument. Israeli and Polish officials announced a tentative revised toll of at least 1.1 million dead, about 90 percent being Jews from almost every country in Europe.¹³

Around September of 1989, mainstream Holocaust historians began admitting that the four million figure was a deliberate myth, demonstrating that conspiracy (premeditated distortions introduced for political ends) was involved in the shaping of the Holocaust doctrine. According to Israeli historian Yehuda Bauer, the Poles wanted to create a “national myth,” so this “required” that a large number of both Poles and Jews lost their lives at Auschwitz. Polish propagandists intentionally exaggerated the figures, and

told the world that 1.5 million Poles and 2.5 million Jews were murdered at Auschwitz concentration camp.¹⁴

Professor van Pelt, along with his fellow Holocaust historian Deborah Dwork, concede that the contemporary Auschwitz concentration camp tourist site contains outright falsifications with a controlled ideological message, which mislead visitors.¹⁵ This should raise this question in the reader's mind: how much of the Auschwitz extermination story is politically inspired falsehood?

Professor van Pelt also admitted that the "evidence" for the mass killings of Jews at Treblinka, Sobibor and Belzec—where allegedly millions were murdered—is sparse at best. In reference to these three camps, he wrote:¹⁶

"There are few eyewitnesses, no confession that can compare to that given by [Auschwitz commandant Rudolf] Höss, no significant remains, and few archival sources."

Archeological investigations of Belzec concentration camp in the late 1990s found no trace of the alleged homicidal gas chambers. Holocaust researcher Robin O'Neal, a firm believer in the traditional Holocaust narrative and one of those who took part in the archeological investigations of Belzec, admitted:¹⁷

"We found no trace of the gassing barracks dating from either the first or second phase of the camp's construction."

In 1946-1947, the Central Commission for Investigation of German Crimes in Poland claimed that 250,000 people were murdered at the alleged Nazi extermination camp of Sobibor. Israeli and Polish archeologists who investigated the Sobibor site found no physical evidence to prove the Sobibor "gas chambers" existed, or that hundreds of thousands were massacred there.¹⁸ For sure, these forensic scientists (who are firm believers in the traditional Holocaust extermination story) find it difficult to imagine how 250,000 could have been murdered there.¹⁹ To date, archeological science cannot determine the site of the "gas chambers" or even if they existed. The reader is strongly encouraged to read the forensic study to see that this is indeed the case.²⁰

The bitter critic of "Holocaust denial," Professor Deborah Lipstadt, conceded that the story that the Nazis made soap from Jewish corpses is another war time falsehood.²¹ Another Holocaust-era historian, Richard Breitmann, made a similar finding: the claim that the Nazis manufactured fertilizer and fats from corpses is erroneous.²²

Dr. Lipstadt also pointed to evidence that casts doubt on the value of Holocaust survivor testimony, the form of “evidence” that comprises most of the “proof” of the traditional view of the Holocaust. She wrote:²³

“For a variety of reasons some [former Nazi concentration camp] inmates did and still do embellish their experiences. Others sometimes adopt the experiences of fellow survivors as their own.”

Although Lipstadt argues that there are ways to vindicate Holocaust eyewitness testimony, she goes on to make this eye opening statement in regard to the testimonies in the possession of Israel’s national memorial to the Holocaust, Yad Vashem:²⁴

“[T]he Institute for Historical Review published a report from the Jerusalem Post in which the director of Yad Vashem’s archives reported that more than half of its testimonies from Holocaust survivors are ‘unreliable.’ According to Yad Vashem officials, these testimonies have never been used as evidence in Nazi war crimes trials because survivors who wanted to be ‘part of history’ may, in fact, have allowed their imaginations to ‘run away with them.’”

Here we have a prominent Holocaust historian putting forth reasons (perhaps unwittingly) showing that a significant number of Holocaust “eyewitness testimonies” are simply unreliable. Since a large portion of Holocaust “eyewitness testimony” has been labeled “unreliable,” it is certainly correct for historians to be, at the very least, skeptical of all such testimony.

Another academic historian provided reasons for the reader to be very skeptical of “eyewitness testimony” to the Holocaust. French-Jewish historian Pierre Vidal-Naquet briefly discussed eyewitnesses who claimed they “saw gas chambers” where there were none.²⁵ He admits “there were imaginary gas chambers.”²⁶ That is, many Holocaust survivors gave false testimony, claiming there were “homicidal mass gassings” where it is now known that they never happened. He cites the false testimony “of a Protestant theologian, Charles Hauter, who was deported to Buchenwald, never saw any gas chamber, and who went on to rave about them.”²⁷

In a paraphrase of Dr. Robert Faurisson’s Holocaust revisionist argument, Vidal-Naquet’s translator states the dilemma in the form of a question:²⁸

“Moreover, since numerous eyewitness reports [about the ‘homicidal gas chambers’] had already been discredited, on what basis could anyone accept any such testimony?”

Once again, the reader should ask himself this question. How can the testimony of survivors of the “death camps” prove that the Holocaust and the

death of six million Jews is a historical fact when so many of these testimonies have been shown to be unreliable?

In the foregoing discussion, only mainstream and “academically respectable” sources were used to make my case. All material that mainstream academics would label as “Holocaust denialist” was deliberately ignored. This alone should suggest to the reader that there is something seriously amiss with the traditional Holocaust story. Indeed, the list of deceptions, very weak and suspect evidence, highly questionable claims, politically inspired falsehoods, contradictions, and absurdities in the traditional Holocaust doctrine are seemingly endless.²⁹ For all of these reasons, one can rightly refer to the orthodox Holocaust story as “the Holocaust myth.”

One would think that after all of the damaging admissions and concessions made by official Holocaust sources, the doctrine itself would have undergone world wide scrutiny, questioning and debunking. Yet, this is not the case, and herein is the enigma that surrounds the Holocaust doctrine. Despite the fact that the orthodox Holocaust story is demonstrably weak, it continues to thrive and flourish. Is this state of affairs solely due the enormous power and influence of the International Jewish-Zionist power elite and the state of Israel?

In the early 1980s, the late Revisionist scholar Dr. Charles Weber wrote a very important, but now largely forgotten essay concerning the non-Jewish groups that promote and benefit from the Holocaust myth. Weber stated:³⁰

“Obvious though the usefulness of the ‘Holocaust’ material to Zionists may be, its continuous exploitation by various non-Jewish groups in various lands for various reasons is of a continuing importance that heretofore has not been generally realized. As corrosive, divisive and destructive as the ‘Holocaust’ material and extermination thesis are, we must certainly not consider Jews exclusively responsible for their continued propagation.”

There are some who operate under the illusion that the *sole* reason the Holocaust myth survives and flourishes is because of Jewish-Zionist power and influence. Although Israel and the International Jewish-Zionist power elite are the most important forces behind the Holocaust ideology, there are also non-Jewish groups that promote it and benefit by it, and thus help to insure its continued success. These non-Jewish groups have largely been overlooked.

A Word of Caution before We Begin

Before we examine the non-Jewish groups that promote the Holocaust myth, it is important to note that all of them were or still are subject to Jewish pressure and influence. The world Jewish community has played a decisive role in the history of the twentieth and first decade of the twenty first centuries, and all of the governments and non-Jewish factions we are about to discuss have felt their enormous impact. Whether it be the post WWII German governments, the former Communist regimes of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, the governments of Britain, Poland and the United States, left-wing liberal or neo-conservative groups of the West, all of them have been subject to Jewish influence.³¹

As historian Weber rightly pointed out in his 1982 essay, we are confronted with the question as to what extent we are dealing with a non-Jewish group and non-Jewish interests in each case. That is to say: do these non-Jewish factions promote the Holocaust ideology solely because Jews pressured them to do so, contrary to their specific group's best interests? Or, do they promote the Holocaust ideology because it is serving some specific non-Jewish interest that just happens to be congruent with Jewish interests?

Be that as it may, all of these governments and groups had or still have powerful non-Jewish people in them who serve non-Jewish political interests, and at least some of the latter coincide with Jewish interests on the issue of the Holocaust myth. Many members of these non-Jewish groups likely believe that the traditional Holocaust story is objectively true, but this in no way nullifies the fact that they also have underlying agendas that motivate them to promote this doctrine.

Germany and the Holocaust Myth

At the close of WWII, the occupying powers of Germany divided the country up and created two different governments. The West German government was a creation of the United States, Great Britain and France, with East Germany's governing body being a creation of the communist Soviet Union.

The late historian, political analyst and international affairs authority William Henry Chamberlin, summed up the situation in regard to the former East Germany. In 1963, he observed:³²

"The so-called DDR (initials for German Democratic Republic) is neither German nor democratic nor a republic. It is a totalitarian police regime, completely subservient to the will of a foreign power, the Soviet Union."

While the government in West Germany was less totalitarian in nature than that in the East, the West German political establishment could still rightly be classified as a colonial government of the United States, Great Britain and France. The occupation powers retained the right to manage German domestic affairs and administration and to nullify German legislation.³³

Professor Arthur Butz described the political landscape in his seminal work of Holocaust revisionism:³⁴

"The entire political structure of West Germany was established by the U.S. government. This includes the control of newspapers and other media, the control of the schools, and the constitution of the Bundesrepublik. As a puppet creation, this 'German' political establishment necessarily had an interest in the lies of the conquerors and behaved accordingly."

The historical evidence supports Butz's viewpoint. The "Nazi extermination camp" myth was declared "historical truth" at the Nuremberg trials, and it was then used as an ideological cornerstone for the Allied installed governments in postwar Germany. The conquered Germans were to be fully indoctrinated with the Holocaust ideology. Political analyst Chamberlin pointed out in 1963 that government education ministries ordered that school children receive full information about "Nazi policies of violence and cruelty [real or made up?]."³⁵ In accord with this policy:³⁶

"Films of Nazi brutalities [real or made up?] have been widely shown in German schools, and the interest of the children is kept alive by discussions and questionnaires."

Furthermore, the military establishment of West Germany was under the control of the United States and NATO.³⁷ As of 2008, there were 150,000 American troops stationed within southern Germany.³⁸

The government of the former West Germany believed it attained the imprint of legitimacy from numerous Holocaust trials. A historian of Jewish-German relations (who undoubtedly would condemn my views in this essay), Jeffrey Herf, noted:³⁹

"The Auschwitz trial conducted in Frankfurt-am-Main in 1964, as well as trials of those who had participated in murders in the Einsatzgruppen and at the extermination camps in Belzec, Treblinka, Sobibor, Chelmo, and Maidanek, offered further details to the West German public about the Holocaust and the death camps in Poland."

In a political culture such as this, prosecutors could advance their careers by aggressively pursuing alleged Nazi war criminals.⁴⁰

A divided Germany is now a thing of the past, but the Holocaust myth still remains an ideological cornerstone of the present German government. Indeed, in April 1999, the German Federal Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer stated:⁴¹

“All democracies have a basis, a cornerstone. For France it is 1789, for Germany it is Auschwitz.”

In the German daily *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, Patrick Bahners put forth a founding belief of the present German government. If one “denies the murder of the Jews, he repudiates the legitimacy of the Federal Republic.”⁴²

At the present time, it is impossible for anyone to contest the traditional Holocaust extermination story within the German legal system. “Holocaust denial” is a criminal offense which is punishable with up to five years of imprisonment. In a German court, no exonerating evidence may be introduced in such trials, since the same evidence would amount to ‘denial’ as well and would merely lead to another criminal indictment of the defendant and his lawyer.⁴³

It is in this sociopolitical context that we must decipher German motives. Since the governing class’s position of power and influence is “justified” and “legitimized” by the Holocaust ideology, it makes sense that they would aggressively indoctrinate the German masses with it. All German politicians must accept and promote the Holocaust myth, for in the present German political culture they cannot do otherwise.

Since the late 19th century, Germany was incapable of growing sufficient food for its growing population; they were forced to export or starve. This brought them into economic conflict with other European nations that must also compete for overseas markets. This problem became even more acute after the post-war loss of formerly eastern German lands to Poland. We let political analyst Chamberlin describe the dilemma:⁴⁴

“In short, Germany, never self-sufficient in food, was first to be deprived much of its best arable land, located in the regions transferred to Poland, and was also to be placed under a multitude of restrictions extremely prejudiced to its industry and foreign trade.”

The present German government is faced with delicate problems with regard to approval from other nations, for the reason of satisfying the basic economic needs of the nation. Thus, as a result of the ongoing, decades long and overwhelming propaganda deluge against National Socialist Germany, successive German governments were forced to disavow everything that Germany of 1933-1945 represented.⁴⁵



President Eisenhower and John Foster Dulles in 1956. Dulles is recorded as having said, "We cannot have all of our policies made in Jerusalem." Source: Wikimedia Commons.

Jewish influence on the American political system would also play a role in determining how German government officials would behave in regard to Jewish interests. Since the United States government had the final control of Germany, Jewish groups could influence American policy toward Germany by way of the United States government. Indeed, President Eisenhower's Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, stated point blank in the context of the 1956 Suez crisis:⁴⁶

"We cannot have all of our policies made in Jerusalem [...]. I am aware how almost impossible it is in this country to carry out a foreign policy not approved by the Jews. Marshall and Forrestal learned that. I am going to try to have one."

Let me give just one small piece of evidence in support of Dulles's statement. In 1952, eighty percent of the Democratic Party presidential campaign funds came from Jewish sources.⁴⁷

In 1952, German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer advocated restitution to Israel and Jewish organizations. He argued that if the Germans did not give restitution to Jews, it would be a foreign policy disaster of the first order. For one, Germany would be unable to receive foreign credits. Making res-

titution payments to Jews, he believed, was an “absolute moral, political, and economic necessity.”⁴⁸ Financial restitution to Jews was the price to pay for German entry into the Western alliance. Adenauer was informed by an influential American official that a German agreement with Israel and Jewish organizations would be a political event on the same level with treaties “establishing German sovereignty,” and entry into the European Defense Community.⁴⁹

With that being said, it is now easier to understand why from 1953 to 1965 West Germany delivered to the Zionist state goods such as ships, machine tools, trains, autos, medical equipment, and telephone technology that were crucial for the construction of infrastructure. These deliveries amounted to between 10 and 15 percent of annual Israeli imports.⁵⁰ Not only did such a course of action satisfy an alleged “moral necessity” (e.g., assuage a “guilty” German conscience), it also served an economic and political function.

German political and economic subordination to Israel and the Jewish power elite continues to this very day. In a speech to the Israeli Knesset on March 18, 2008, the current German Chancellor Angela Merkel spoke of “Germany’s Holocaust shame” and pledged its continuing support for the Jewish state in the Middle East.⁵¹ This is precisely the psychological reaction that the Holocaust myth is meant to induce in the German people, because it “wins” mass support for the current German rulers and their relationship with Israel and Zionism.

The current political structure of contemporary Germany, and the political-economic relationship between Germany and Israel, can be explained by some of the basic tenets of Marxism. Political philosopher Roger Scruton explains the function of “ideology” in Marxist theories:⁵²

“[I]deology’ denotes any set of ideas and values which has the social function of consolidating a particular economic order, and which is explained by that fact alone, and not by its inherent truth or reasonableness [...]. Ideology wins support for class rule, by persuading oppressed classes to accept the description of reality which render their subordination ‘natural.’ It therefore has three principal functions: to legitimate, to mystify, and to console.”

The contradictions, absurdities, and outright falsehoods in the Holocaust ideology are endless.⁵³ The promotion of the Holocaust ideology in the Federal Republic of Germany is not to be explained because of its inherent truth or reasonableness. Rather, its dominance is largely explained by the fact that it serves to “justify” and “legitimize” the entire sociopolitical

structure in the Federal Republic, and the exploitative economic relationship between the Israeli and German people. The Holocaust ideology “persuades” the German masses that “their” government is “good and legitimate” and financial subordination to Israel and Zionism is “wholly morally correct and natural.” With the vigorous promotion of the Holocaust ideology, the current German rulers solidify their position of power over the German people.

Yet, the Holocaust doctrine and the sociopolitical status quo that it “justifies” contain within it the seeds of its own destruction. The more the German national identity is assaulted with Holocaust falsehoods, the more the German people are financially exploited by this, so to will more and more Germans come to reject the Holocaust doctrine and the sociopolitical order that is associated with it.

If the current German rulers are truly interested in building a stable democratic society, and one that serves the best interests of the German people, they would allow freedom of debate on the Holocaust issue, and attempt to get at the whole truth. Basing political systems upon demonstrable falsehoods that degrade and exploit the German masses makes for a very politically unstable and volatile situation.

Russia and the Holocaust Myth

It is well established that Jews played a decisive role in the establishment and functioning of Soviet Communism.⁵⁴ Yet, Soviet promotion of the Holocaust ideology cannot be totally explained by this fact alone. Hitler realized that as long as the tyrannical dictator Joseph Stalin was in control of the Soviet Union, its foreign policy would be dictated by Soviet Communist interests independently of specifically Jewish interests. In a speech of January 1941, the German dictator stated:⁵⁵

“Though we have very favorable political and economic agreements with Russia, I prefer to rely on the powerful means at my disposal. [...] As long as Stalin lives, there is probably no danger; he is intelligent and careful. But should he cease to be there, the Jews, who at present occupy only second- and third-rank positions might move up again into the first-rank.”

In their brutal war against National Socialist Germany, Stalinist Communism utilized the Holocaust myth as an important propaganda weapon in order to blacken the image of their hated enemy. On December 19, 1942, a “special statement” was issued by the Soviet Bureau of Infor-

mation from Moscow, which reported on the alleged extermination of the European Jews. It read in part:⁵⁶

“The cannibalistic plan elaborated by Hitler in the beginning of the current year provides for the concentration before the end of 1942 in the east of Europe, chiefly in the territory of Poland, of about 4,000,000 Jews for the purpose of murdering them.”

There was, however, a certain ambiguity inherent in the Soviet promotion of the Holocaust ideology. Stalinist Communists promoted it because it served their interests in winning the war. Yet, at times they underplayed the claim that the Germans were attempting to exterminate the Jews, because they did not want to give credence to the National Socialist idea that Bolshevism and World Jewry were virtually identical.⁵⁷ As we shall see, ambiguity in regard to the Holocaust carries on to this very day in contemporary Russia.

Until the end of communism in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, the Holocaust ideology was continually used by communist rulers to attain their ends. Revisionist historian Charles Weber noted that the Holocaust material had proved to be a useful ideological weapon in a number of Russian-Soviet propaganda efforts, including the Nuremberg trials. It enabled the Soviet Union to cover up, hide and obliterate by contrast the awareness of the many crimes the Soviet Union perpetrated against other nations and peoples, such as the Katyn massacre in Poland. Even the anti-Holocaust-revisionist historian Jeffrey Herf admits that the Soviets ran concentration camps in which death was brought about by exposure to the elements or slow starvation.⁵⁸ The Holocaust ideology was very useful in masking the ongoing brutality of the Soviets.

Weber added this astute observation about Soviet Communist use of the Holocaust myth:⁵⁹

“An essential objective of this propaganda effort is the demonstration that in spite of the obvious and continued oppressiveness of the Soviet empire, a German victory would have meant a worse life. The ‘Holocaust’ material thus plays an essential role in the pacification of the many nations and ethnic groups of the Soviet empire, including a number of lands which fought as sovereign states on the side of Germany during the titanic struggle against Communism during 1941-1945: Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria and Slovakia. The material is continually used as a justification to the outside world for the retention of Eastern Europe in the Soviet empire. A further advantage to the Soviet empire

from stressing the 'Holocaust' material lies in its appeal to the Jewish minorities in various lands, especially in the United States."

The Soviet Union has been consigned to the dustbin of history, but the promotion of the Holocaust ideology still serves the interests of the current Russian government, as they want to instill a sense of national pride in the Russian masses. Here is a statement of the Russian representative to the United Nations in regard to the 2007 United Nations Resolution condemning "Holocaust denial":⁶⁰

"[T]he Red Army had freed the Auschwitz death camp, one of the largest. The memory of the heroism of the Soviet soldiers and the many millions of victims in his country could never reconcile itself with those of 'opportunistic political interest' who sought to distort the significance of that history."

Thus, the Holocaust myth forms a cornerstone of Russian nationalism, as it casts the Russian people in the role of "heroic liberators" during WWII.

UN Russian Federation representative Vitaly Churkin hinted that this is what is behind Russia's support of the 2007 United Nations Resolution condemning "Holocaust denial":⁶¹

"[M]ember States were bound to include in that condemnation attempts to revise the history of the Second World War and the merits of those who took up arms to fight the Nazis. Any attempt to make heroic the henchmen of fascism must be rejected."

In an August 2009, Russian-Israeli statement, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev and his Israeli counterpart, Shimon Peres, jointly declared: ⁶²

"We express our deep indignation at attempts to deny the great contribution that the Russian people and other peoples of the Soviet Union brought to the victory over Nazi Germany and also (attempts) to deny the Holocaust of European Jews. [...] No kind of attempt to revise history can diminish the clear facts."

The "Nazi gas chamber" myth provides the Russian people with an exaggerated self-image as heroic liberators and freedom fighters. After all, so the propaganda line goes, they "saved the world" from the clutches of the "evil Germans" who were "attempting to exterminate" the "inferior races" who opposed them. Take away the Holocaust myth, and what do we end up with?

A repudiation of the Holocaust ideology would allow another reappraisal of the crimes, atrocities, genocide and oppression committed by the Stalinist regime. The end result of such historical revisionism would be the

demolition of a pillar of Russian patriotic ideology, and the world-wide realization that Stalinist Communism was more oppressive and evil than National Socialism. Indeed, even the bitter intellectual opponent of Holocaust revisionism, Deborah Lipstadt, admits that Stalin killed more people than Hitler ever did.⁶³

But alas! Ambiguity in relation to the Holocaust has reared its head again in post-communist Russia. As Russia authority Jonathan Brent points out:⁶⁴

"In 2001, a notion to condemn anti-Semitism was rejected again by the Duma, and in April 2001, Vladimir Zhirinovsky and other deputies protested effectively against observing a minute of silence to commemorate the victims of the Holocaust on Soviet soil—approximately one half of all Jews murdered by the Nazis."

This suggests that Russians are gradually becoming cognizant of the negative role that the Holocaust myth plays in world affairs. Keep in mind that Russians are well aware of the negative and destructive role that certain Jewish groups have played in Soviet Communism and contemporary Russia (e.g., the oligarchs), and that Russia is a major supplier of Israel's enemies, Syria and Iran.⁶⁵ All of these factors combined could set the stage for a possible future confrontation with Zionist groups and the state of Israel. If this scenario comes to pass, the Russian government may repudiate the Holocaust myth.

When the Soviet Communists took control of Auschwitz in January 1945, they transported to Moscow hundreds of boxes of war time German documents about the camp, and deposited them in an archive controlled by the secret police.⁶⁶ In the future, political realities may dictate that Russia should expose the Holocaust myth for the politically inspired falsehood that it is. If this comes to be, the Russians may reveal formerly hidden documents to the world and deliver the final death blow to the Holocaust myth. Revisionist historian Jürgen Graf made another interesting suggestion: in a serious future confrontation between the Russian and United States governments, the Kremlin may decide to publish formerly suppressed documents, proving that the "Nazi extermination camps" belong to the realm of propaganda.⁶⁷

These suggestions by historian Graf and I are not far-fetched at all. During WWII and at the Nuremburg trials in the aftermath of the war, the Soviets claimed that the Germans "committed" the Katyn massacre in Poland. It was not until April 1990 that the former USSR confessed up and admitted that the Soviet secret police were indeed responsible for the atrocity.⁶⁸

We may live to see a similar scenario play out with the Holocaust myth. It may be Russians, and not Jews, that will determine the future fate of the Holocaust myth.

Poland and the Holocaust Myth

In the August 18, 1967 issue of *Time* magazine (pp. 28-29), Jewish influence in the former Polish Communist government was highlighted. They wrote:

“Though anti-Semitism has a long and virulent history in Poland, Jews form a vital and powerful segment of the present Polish government. As in other countries in Eastern Europe, the roots of the Polish Communist Party go back to 19th century Jewish-led organizations. And as Europe’s Communist parties grew after World War I, so did the influence of the Jews within them. During World War II and Nazi occupation, many Polish Communist Jews fled to Russia for sanctuary – and many returned with the Red Army to hold high military, secret police and administrative posts. Thus, though there are only 30,000 Jews in Poland today, they are seeded influentially from the politburo down through the intellectual community and the Polish press. After Party Boss Wladyslaw Gomulka’s decision to break off diplomatic ties with Israel last June at Moscow’s behest, there was a modicum of wry truth in a gibe that quickly made the rounds in Warsaw: Tel Aviv was going to retaliate by withdrawing the Polish government [...].”

Nevertheless, as in the case of Russia, Polish promotion of the Holocaust myth cannot be solely explained by Jewish influence.

In 1947, the Polish government enacted a law that commemorated the martyrdom of Poland and other nations at the Auschwitz concentration camp, and the new Auschwitz State Museum was born.⁶⁹ As Robert Jan van Pelt observed:⁷⁰

“Poles and Jews contend for the spiritual ownership of the camp. Auschwitz is the most significant memorial site of the [Jewish Holocaust], and it is also the most significant memorial site of Polish suffering under German rule.”

As in the case of Russia, the Holocaust ideology was made into a cornerstone of Polish nationalism. Indeed, the Poles wanted to create a “national myth,” so this “required” that a large number of both Poles and Jews lost their lives at Auschwitz. With this political end in mind, Polish propagandists conspired to intentionally exaggerate the Auschwitz death figures.⁷¹

To the credit of the *New York Times*, they did point out how the Holocaust ideology, inclusive of the falsehood that four million people were murdered at Auschwitz, granted an air of legitimacy to the political landscape in Poland in 1979: “[P]oland’s suffering at the hands of Nazi Germany is still viewed as a source of unity, and the country’s liberation by the Red Army is regarded as the imprint of the legitimacy of the country’s Marxist leadership.”⁷²

The “etched in stone fact”—that four million people were murdered at Auschwitz—has been exposed for the intelligently designed lie that it was. Nevertheless, the current Polish government provides more than \$3.6 million a year to maintain Auschwitz concentration camp as a memorial site of the Holocaust.⁷³ Does the Polish leadership do this solely because the Jewish lobby wants them to do this? The answer is no.

The need to promote the Auschwitz mythos survives in both Jews and Poles. “The collapse of communism had done nothing to resolve the tensions between Poles and Jews over spiritual ownership of the site,” Professors Dwork and van Pelt so rightly noted.⁷⁴ By the Polish church’s calculations, 2,647 Polish Roman Catholic Priests died at the camp, thus providing the Polish nation with a story of martyrdom.⁷⁵

The Auschwitz-Birkenau complex is a major tourist site that provides the Polish economy with much needed revenue. In 1989, 700,000 people from eighty-nine countries visited the camp.⁷⁶ In 2008, it experienced more than one million visitors, and in 2009 a record number of 1.3 million toured the site.⁷⁷

Dutch-Jewish historian Robert Jan van Pelt noted that the falsehood that four million people were murdered at Auschwitz was originally “established” by the Soviets, and then later used by the communist rulers of Poland for their own political goal of laying claim to formerly German territories. He wrote:⁷⁸

“As relations between the East and West deteriorated after the war, with the largest part of Germany becoming part of NATO and with that country refusing to recognize the legitimacy of postwar Polish annexation of the former German territories of East Prussia, Pomerania, and Silesia, the number of victims [at Auschwitz concentration camp] became a political issue. The communist rulers of Poland were unwilling to give an inch on their claims against Germany as long as the Bonn government did not recognize the territorial integrity of the People’s Republic of Poland, and therefore they continued to maintain, as a matter of policy, that 4 million people had been killed in Auschwitz.”

Whether or not the Polish position vis-à-vis the disputed territories is legitimate or not, Polish authorities still have an ulterior vested interest in promoting the Holocaust ideology. Although Germany and Poland are presently at peace, there is a history of hostility between them. The two countries have quarreled bitterly over war damages, past suffering, and the rights of an estimated 3 million ethnic Germans expelled as Poland became a Soviet communist satellite.⁷⁹ After the unification of Germany, the issue of lands ceded to Poland after the war was again raised in Germany.⁸⁰

Polish hostility toward Germany was brought to surface when the late Pope John Paul II visited Auschwitz in June 1979. When asked how he felt about Germans, one Polish citizen was quoted as saying:⁸¹

"As a Christian, it is my duty to forgive, but as a Pole and as a human being I am still thinking it over."

Just as the Holocaust myth serves to "justify" Jewish hatred of Germans, so to does it serve to "justify" Polish suspicion and hostility toward Germans.

For the Polish nation, not only does the Holocaust myth serve as a cornerstone of Polish nationalism, a useful ideological weapon against Germany, a "justification" for anti-German hostility, and a source of much needed revenue for its sometimes sluggish economy, it also provides a "safeguard" against any future German demand that Poland give back the disputed territories to Germany. Many Poles fear in their hearts that the post-war state of Poland stands and falls with Auschwitz.

Yet, again as in the case of Russia, the Holocaust myth stands on some shaky ground in Poland. The remembrance of the suffering that both Poles and Germans experienced under Communism could be a future unifying force between the two. The finding of mass graves dating from the end of WWII have brought the two together.⁸² In September 2009, the Polish parliament passed a resolution condemning the Soviet invasion of Poland, which led to a massive loss of Polish lives and prison camps for many. The resolution, which irked Russia, referred to a series of massacres of Poles in Russia, as well as mass deportations of over one million Poles to Siberia. Poland also called on Russia to condemn the crimes.⁸³

The ongoing realization of the devastation that Poland suffered because of Stalinist communism and the significant role that Jews played in the Communist nightmare could help trigger a dramatic reappraisal of the Holocaust myth in Poland. Indeed, it may have already begun. In January 2010, retired Polish Bishop Tadeusz Pieronek pointed out how Jewish groups exploit the Holocaust ideology for political gain.⁸⁴

As Revisionists Jürgen Graf and Carlo Mattogno opined, a real and lasting reconciliation between the Polish and German peoples can only flourish on a foundation of complete truth about what really happened in those concentration camps located on Polish soil. The lies and exaggerations in the Holocaust myth only exacerbate German-Polish hostilities.⁸⁵

The Holocaust as a Weapon against European People and Biological Theories of Human Behavior and Race

Jewish intellectual Leon Klinghoffer made an honest admission in the *Forward*. He pointed out that the Holocaust ideology is not only a “Jewish memory” but also a Jewish weapon against non-Jewish people.⁸⁶

“The world is aware how jealously the Jewish community guards the Holocaust, both as a memory and a weapon.”

Indeed, the president of the Union for Reform Judaism, Rabbi Eric Yoffe, used the Holocaust ideology as a weapon against all Europeans. He stated:⁸⁷

“And in Europe, which bears the mark of Cain for its complicity in the Holocaust, the Arab-Israeli conflict has become a means of absolving guilt. In turning Israelis from victims into Nazis, they [non-Jewish Europeans] seek to cleanse their consciences by casting their sins upon us [the Jews].”

It is not only Jews that use the Holocaust as a weapon against Christian White people, for Non-White intellectuals do the same. The Black-American evolutionary biologist and critic of White Culture, Joseph L. Graves Jr., stated:⁸⁸

“The roots of the twentieth century Holocaust were planted with the behavior of Christians [read: White Europeans] toward Jews in medieval Europe.”

In addition, the Holocaust myth is used as an ideological weapon against scientific theories that postulate genetics as playing an important role in determining behavioral differences between individuals and racial groups.⁸⁹ Once again, we quote Joseph Graves Jr.:⁹⁰

“Certainly, eugenics has to take some responsibility for the Holocaust.”

The Holocaust Myth: A Motivating Force for Liberal Social Action

For many influential non-Jewish, American and European liberals, belief in the Holocaust has replaced belief in God as the supreme virtue. Expressing a widely held sentiment among liberal US political elites, Teresa Heinz Kerry, wife of former presidential candidate John Kerry, stated in the highly influential *Forward*: “Need it be said again? The gas chambers, the bureaucratic system of murder, the efforts to sever an entire people from their place in the world, did happen, did exist and remains a unifying cause for those who choose justice, now and forever more.”⁹¹ Thus, for left-leaning Gentile liberals, the Holocaust ideology is a motivating force for social action.

In regard to the politically inspired falsehood that four million people were murdered at Auschwitz, here is how the late Pope John Paul II proposed it is to be used. We let the *New York Times* pick up the story here about his June 1979 visit to the camp:⁹²

“His voice going hoarse on the sixth day of the visit to his native Poland, the Pope asked that all his listeners commit themselves to the care of human beings and the oppressed, in testimony for the four million—including two and a half million Jews—who died in the camps he could see from the raised altar platform.”

As in the case of Theresa Heinz Kerry, the Pope proposed that the Holocaust myth should be a motivating force for social action.

The United States, Great Britain and the Holocaust Myth

It is well established that Jewish groups have had a huge influence upon the American and British governments and societies.⁹³ Yet, as in the case of Russia and Poland, Jewish influence *alone* cannot explain the success of the Holocaust ideology in these nations.

Quite obviously, as in Russia and Poland the Holocaust story is part and parcel of American and British political culture. After all, the Americans and British also “saved” the world from “the evil Germans” who were “attempting” to “exterminate” the Jews and other “inferior races.” This writer was raised in a non-Jewish, patriotic American community, and he clearly remembers how this theme was emphasized by his educators--Catholic nuns and priests, teachers, family members and non-Jewish political officials. It was not exclusively Jewish sources in the mass media who were indoctrinating my young mind with this American patriotic belief.

Non-Jewish American and British power elites also have a vested interest in promoting the Holocaust ideology. As the Holocaust historian Jeffrey Herf revealed in his study, *The Jewish Enemy*, the Holocaust ideology paints the American and British war effort during WWII in a good and ethical light, and thus “justifies” the entire Allied war effort against Germany.⁹⁴ In the titanic struggle against Germany, which sacrificed an enormous number of lives and cost a massive amount of resources, the British and American governments had to provide their people with “justifications” for such expenditures of human blood and treasure. Can one find a better “justification” than the story that the “monstrous Germans,” if they won the war, would attempt to exterminate all Jews, “inferior races,” and anyone else who stood in their way in “gas chambers?”

As anti-Holocaust revisionist historian Herf makes clear, one of the important characteristics of mass propaganda is that it appeals to stark contrasts between good and evil.⁹⁵ The Holocaust doctrine fits the bill perfectly. He wrote:⁹⁶

“Reports of the Final Solution [the Nazi attempt to exterminate the Jews during WWII] underscored the stark moral dichotomy between Nazi Germany and its allies, on the one hand, and the United Nations [Americans, British, Soviets, etc.] on the other. They reinforced the Allies’ conviction that this was a war between freedom and tyranny, good and evil, civilization and barbarism.”

In a formal declaration reflecting the official view of the United States government, it was stated:⁹⁷

“The 1945 defeat of Nazi Germany by the U.S. and its allies finally put a stop to dictator Adolf Hitler’s campaign of genocide.”

In a word, take away the Holocaust ideology and one important “justification” of the American and British war effort against Germany is consigned to the dustbin of history. Americans and Britons will start asking uncomfortable questions, such as: Why did we go to war with Germany? Maybe we should not have gone to war with Germany, and maybe it was a huge error to be allied with the murderous Stalinist regime? Questions like this clearly pose a threat to the power and influence of the governing elites in American and British society.

One must also not forget that, just as the Soviet Union did, so to did the American and British governments use the Holocaust myth to hide and obliterate by contrast the awareness of the brutality and mass killing of innocents that they are responsible for. For example, anti-Holocaust revisionist historian Herf admits that the British bombing campaign against Ger-

many resulted in an estimated 500,000 German civilian deaths, disproportionately among women and children.⁹⁸ Perhaps now we can understand an underlying motive behind Winston Churchill's statement on the alleged Jewish Holocaust toward the end of the war. He declared:⁹⁹

"There is no doubt that this is probably the greatest and most horrible crime ever committed in the whole history of the world, and it has been done by scientific machinery by nominally civilized men in the name of a great state and one of the leading races of Europe."

If the alleged mass murder of six million Jews by the Germans is the greatest and most horrible crime ever committed in the whole history of the world, then the mass killing of hundreds of thousands of German women and children by British government bombs pales in comparison, and is obliterated by contrast. The Holocaust ideology performed its services well for Winston Churchill.

Certainly, economic factors usually play a role in the relationships between nations. As in the case of Poland, Great Britain had an economic motive in their promotion of the Holocaust ideology. There is a history of commercial and industrial rivalry between England and Germany, as they were both long-time competitors for overseas markets. The Holocaust ideology aided England in their psychological discrediting of their economic competitor Germany.¹⁰⁰

In March 2006, former US President George W. Bush publicly admitted that concerns about Iran's alleged nuclear weapons program derive largely from the threat it poses to Israel. In his own words:¹⁰¹

"The threat from Iran is, of course, their stated objective to destroy our strong ally Israel."

In September of 2007, he invoked the Holocaust ideology in order to "justify" any possible American or Israeli attack upon Iran. A respected British news source, quoting a former Bush aide, claimed his rhetoric was a precise attempt to link Iran's quest for nuclear weapons and desire to wipe Israel off of the map with Hitler's destruction of the Jews. "Iran's active pursuit of technology that could lead to nuclear weapons," Bush was quoted as saying, "threatens to put the region already known for instability and violence under the shadow of a nuclear holocaust."¹⁰²

The former White House aide clarified the meaning of his statement:¹⁰³

"By using the word 'holocaust,' Mr. Bush has provided a moral reason to allow the Jewish state to do what it needs to do-He is reinvoking the notion of 'never again.' If you believe that there could be another Holocaust, it becomes morally indefensible to stand back. It is a powerful

and loaded term. Those people in Europe who believed that the neo-cons have gone away and shrunk under a rock had better wise up fast."

In the fall of 2008, Republican vice-presidential candidate Sarah Palin, in her debate with her Democratic rival Joe Biden, also invoked the Holocaust ideology as a "justification" for any future American military action against Iran. Bush and Palin are two influential, Christian Zionist politicians who firmly believe that support for Israel and Zionism is in the best interests of the United States—and they used the Holocaust ideology as a "justification" for their agenda.

Nevertheless, as in the case of Germany, Russia, and Poland, the Holocaust ideology in the United States and Great Britain is on shaky ground. The masses in these nations are gradually becoming aware of the negative role it plays, most notably as a "justification" for the continued oppression of the Palestinian people by Israel, as an ideological weapon against the European-descended portion of the population, and a "justification" for future destructive wars that could threaten the very survival of the two countries. All of these factors coming together could trigger a massive future reappraisal of the Holocaust myth in the US and Britain.

Jewish Promotion of the Holocaust Myth: Why the Success?

There are many, even dedicated critics of Zionism and Israel, who reject the findings of Holocaust revisionism for this reason. They say it is just not believable that Israel and Jewish-Zionist groups could make most of the world accept the traditional Holocaust story as a "well established fact" if it actually were a falsehood. Surely, if it were false, it would have been exposed a long time ago by a multitude non-Jewish governments and researchers. This viewpoint is mistaken, as it ignores some salient facts.

One must view Jewish-Zionism's success in elevating the Holocaust ideology to the status an unquestionable religious dogma in the surrounding context of non-Jewish interests. During and after WWII, the interests of powerful international Jewish groups dovetailed with the other most powerful groups on this planet—the victorious Allied governments of the Soviet Union, the United States, Great Britain, France and others. Since the most powerful political forces on this planet had a vested interest in promoting the same story, it would be very difficult for anyone to discover that it is false. This is one important reason why the "Holocaust" became an "established fact" throughout much of world.

There is little question that the Holocaust myth still thrives and flourishes, for the most part, because it is thrust upon the world by aggressive Jewish-Zionist groups, but this is far from the entire story. Again, the success of Israel and Jewish-Zionist groups in promoting the Holocaust myth must be placed in the surrounding milieu of non-Jewish interests. Some of the world's other most powerful groups--the American, British and Russian governments, along with "lesser powers" like the German and Polish governments—and other non-Jewish factions—also have a vested interest in promoting the same story. Indeed, time and space considerations did not permit me to discuss many other non-Jewish groups (e.g., the French government, French political factions) that benefit by promoting the Holocaust ideology.

In short, the most powerful political forces on this planet (both Jewish and non-Jewish) in combination with the enormous influence of the mass communications industry in modern life have, to this day, insured the success of the Holocaust myth.

The Future of the Holocaust Myth: What Is to Be Done?

The traditional Holocaust story plays an enormous political, social and economic role in world affairs. It is as if the whole emotional, intellectual, and institutional set-up of the post World War II world has been built around it. It serves as an ideological "justification" for the sociopolitical arrangements in many parts of the world today. Despite the fact that it is a demonstrably weak and flimsy ideology, it has amazing resiliency. The major reason that the traditional Holocaust story still survives is because there are a wide range of powerful groups that benefit from its perpetuation.

The world sociopolitical status quo that the Holocaust ideology "justifies" and "legitimizes" is threatened with collapse. In this world of endless war and violence, it is the duty of politicians, intellectuals and scholars to attempt to come up with peaceful resolutions to the problems humanity faces. It is now up to the powerful interests that are behind the Holocaust myth to engage its opponents, the revisionists, in free and democratic debate so we may get at the truth about the fate of the Jews during World War II. In this way, we can help to build a more rational and humane world order, one that is based more upon truth and less upon politically inspired propaganda.

Notes

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- ⁵ Christopher R. Browning, *Collected Memories: Holocaust History and Postwar Testimony* (The University of Wisconsin Press, 2003), pp. 4-5.
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- ⁸ Ian Kershaw, *Hitler, the Germans, and the Final Solution* (International Institute for Holocaust Research, Yad Vashem, Jerusalem, Yale University Press, 2008), p. 203.
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- ¹⁴ Yehuda Bauer, "Auschwitz: The Dangers of Distortion," *Jerusalem Post International Edition*, week ending 30 September 2009; Peter Steinfelds, "Auschwitz Revisionism: An Israeli Scholar's Case," *New York Times*, 12 November 1989.
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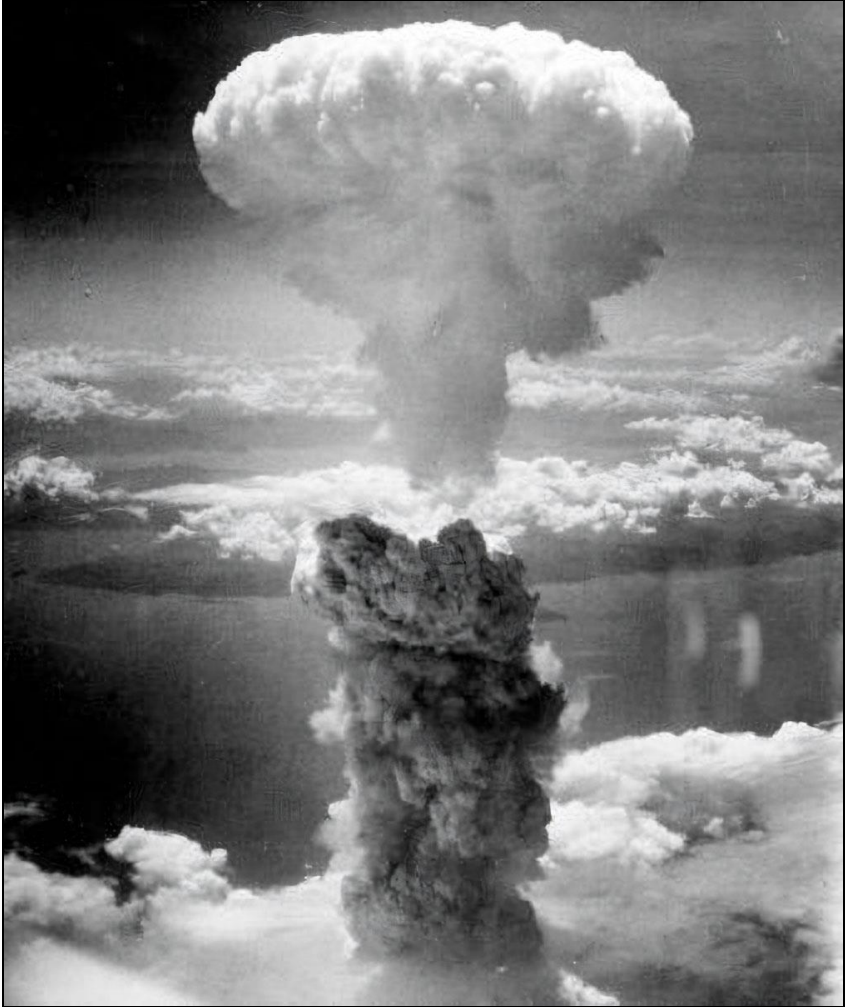
Atomic War Crimes

Joseph Bishop

The further one seriously studies history, and particularly the World War Two period, the more striking is the disconnect between what is popularly believed and what actually happened. Perhaps the reading public continues to shrink, not only in the United States but around the world, while information and opinion are generally retrieved from television and popular films, this in spite of the serious scholarship going on these areas and the many excellent published works in this field. What cutting-edge research demonstrates is often completely at odds with what one views on the big screen and television.

Popular television pseudo-documentary programming continues to purvey certain myths and untruths about World War Two as if they were established facts, the “final word” on the subject of interpretations of events. Former White House personality Lt. Col. Oliver North, for example, has frequently been seen on cable television’s The History Channel and elsewhere, stating as “fact” that the United States used the atom bomb in order to (a) force the Japanese to surrender, and (b) thus prevent an otherwise necessary US military invasion of Japan. Thus, the use of the atom bomb “saved lives”—the figure of one million being commonly cited—and was an act of statesmanship if not heroism.¹ This myth was first conveyed to the American people and the world in the closing days of World War Two by the Truman administration and a largely uncritical, compliant mass print and radio media. The American public commonly trusted their government and what it told them, and this bit of fanciful propaganda was not questioned at the time. Later, however, criticisms did arise but were not widely accepted. The “saving of lives” myth has endured as a common belief for well over half a century right down to the present day. The endurance of this set of myths was further exemplified by the uproar over the 1994-5 “Enola Gay” exhibit at the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C., from those angry at the perceived deviation from the patriotic myth of the bomb used to end the war and save lives.

The truth is that the atomic bombings were unnecessary in a military sense with regard to Japan, and the decision to use them had almost nothing to do with Japan at all, and far more to do with the projection of American power and influence elsewhere in the world.



Atomic bombing of Nagasaki on August 9, 1945. An immortalized, abstractive image. Source: Wikimedia Commons.

Tracing the evolution of this appalling story is useful in numerous regards. It begins in the early war period, as American president Franklin Roosevelt gave audience to a leading scientist named Albert Einstein. Einstein expressed the concern that Nazi Germany had a program to develop a superweapon that could destroy whole cities in one strike and that if the United States did not develop a similar weapon before the Germans did, that the latter could win the war with it. FDR was convinced and authorized what came to be known as the “Manhattan Project,” which worked to develop the atomic bomb.²

Einstein was representative of a group of physicists, many of whom were (a) Jewish, and (b) politically communist. Many of these men were present or former members of various communist parties in Europe or the USA.³ These men were “refugees” from internments and other security actions under the Nazi aegis taking place in Europe, and had taken up residence in a welcoming USA. Their collective animus towards Nazi Germany and the intention to subject it and/or Nazi-controlled Europe to atomic bombings were not in question. This private, political agenda came to influence leading American politicians and their policy formulation.

The United States devoted billions of research dollars to the Manhattan Project, which neared completion by the early summer of 1945. The received history is somewhat different up to this point. The physicists group’s dominant ethnicity and political leanings are left unmentioned, and their work is usually couched within terms of merely wishing to assist America in repelling the great danger emanating from Nazi Europe, and developing a super-weapon to enable America to attain an ability to combat this supposed evil or danger.

However, events played out somewhat differently from their expectations. The war in Europe ended before the bomb was completed, and thus its contemplated use there was abandoned. Victory in Europe (“VE-Day”) came in May 1945 and the first atomic test did not occur until about mid-July. A post-war Europe was already being carved up by the victorious allies, who had agreed to meet at Potsdam, Germany to work out their differences and make the final decisions on the fate of the world. This left the war in the Pacific as the only unresolved area of conflict and the only possible target area for the bomb.

The mythic story line is that the Japanese were stubbornly refusing to surrender, that their nation was dominated by a radicalized military clique who wished the nation to fight to the last island and even to the last man, and that in consequence an invasion of the Japanese home islands by American forces would be necessary to end the war. Such an invasion would cost, it was estimated, at least a million lives and would take many months—if not years—of hard and bloody fighting. It is well known today, and largely undisputed among scholars that Japan actually was ready to surrender and had already been putting out peace feelers to the United States through its diplomats in the Vatican, Portugal, Sweden, and in Moscow.

A dramatic move in this direction was taken by the Japanese emperor himself, in transmitting to the Soviet Union a request to accept the emperor’s personal representative Prince Konoye as an envoy to formalize a sur-

render. The United States had been routinely deciphering and reading Japanese diplomatic and military codes and was well aware of these peace moves and of Japan's disastrous situation by 1945. Clearly it had been thoroughly "beaten" by strategic bombing and naval blockade and was looking for a way out. Secret strategic intelligence studies carried out by the US military demonstrated that Japan would likely surrender within a few months, and that an invasion was not necessary. Even a paucity of targets demonstrated that Japan was at its end and that a naval blockade alone would bring about surrender. Japan was cut off from its armies on the Asian mainland and could thus not count on reinforcement. The home islands were reduced to starvation levels. Its navy had been destroyed. Its industrial capacity was by now nearly nonexistent, having been bombed into oblivion by the ever-present American air forces.

The intelligence reports and summaries, however, were secret in nature, as was the fact that America had broken the Japanese codes and was aware of its internal situation and communications. The American public believed that Japan still retained the strength and purpose to continue fighting for perhaps years to come and had both the means and the suicidal determination to defend itself against an invasion.

Terms of acceptable surrender consisted of a sort of oral "unconditional surrender" mantra. The expression itself was never an official or defined American policy and had originated in a speech given by President Franklin Roosevelt soon after Pearl Harbor in 1941. The American perception was that the Axis powers would have to completely and absolutely give in to the Allies without any preconditions or terms whatsoever. Although a politically popular "feel good" slogan with the public, among military leaders it quickly came to be seen as something which hardened resistance and prolonged the war—thus unnecessarily lengthening American casualty lists and consuming enormous national treasure.⁴

By late 1944, most American political and military leaders were advising the President to define surrender terms to Japan, including a proviso allowing for the retention of the Emperor. It was clearly understood from Japanese peace feelers, decoded secret intercepts, and intelligence reports that the Japanese would accept virtually any and all terms from the victor with the sole exception of the Emperor's status which to the Japanese was non-negotiable, as the Emperor represented Japan's essence and was viewed as a semi-divine being vital for the continuation of Japan physically, culturally, and spiritually. It was also clearly understood that (a) Japan would not surrender without such a proviso, and that (b) America needed the Emperor and his cooperation to ensure a laying down of arms, a spirit

of postwar cooperation, and an orderly occupation. Truman was convinced and the 1945 Potsdam Declaration in its draft stage did contain such a proviso; however, at Byrne's urging it was deleted before its transmission to Japan and the world. Byrnes did not want the war to end just yet; his policy was to continue the war long enough to employ both types of bombs and in as bloody and impressive a way as possible to have a psychological effect upon the Russians. Ultimately, the surrender was "conditional" as it did allow for the Mikado's retention. Hirohito's unprecedented 1945 radio address did in fact order surrender to the Japanese people and allowed America to achieve its goals in Japan – certainly something very difficult if not impossible were the Emperor to have been dethroned or tried as a war criminal.

Advice and opinion relayed to Truman from US Army Generals Marshall, Eisenhower, and MacArthur, US Army Air Force Generals Le May, Spaatz, and Arnold, from US Navy Admirals Nimitz, Leahy, and King, Secretary of the Navy Forrestal, Secretary of War Stimson, Secretary of State Stettinius and Acting Secretary of State Grew—and many others—were a solid collective voice to Truman to not use the bomb, not invade Japan, to formulate America's war aims and soften "unconditional surrender" in something more acceptable to Japan. Such voices had largely convinced the president until Jimmy F. Byrnes's decisive influence on Truman reversed his view and re-oriented policy along harder lines.

General Eisenhower expressed misgivings beforehand to the use of the bomb, as "unnecessary" and "horrible." His somewhat moralistic approach to the atomic bomb is interesting, given his own personal history and doings. He oversaw the carpet- and incendiary-bombing of German cities in which hundreds of thousands of civilians died, as well as the very high death tolls of prisoners retained in camps in Western Europe in the early postwar period; recategorized from POWs to DEPS, their Geneva convention protections were removed and they were typically denied food, medical care, or shelter, resulting in a very high death rate.

To explain this policy reversal, a diplomatic digression is in order. Truman had appointed Byrnes as his secretary of state in mid-1945. Byrnes had been a close friend and mentor of Truman's from the latter's entry into politics many years earlier, and had been a strong associate of Roosevelt also. He had taken Truman under his personal and political wing and influenced his success, even though Byrnes reportedly viewed Truman as a not-so-intelligent nonentity. The 1944 selection of FDR's running mate fell upon Truman almost accidentally, and was widely thought that it should have gone to Byrnes instead.⁵ His accession to the presidency on FDR's



Potsdam 1945. Left to right: Military Aide General Harry H. Vaughan (extreme left), Josef Stalin, Harry S. Truman, Andrei Gromyko, Press Secretary Charles G. Ross, Secretary of State James F. Byrnes and Vacheslav Molotov. Source: Wikimedia Commons.

passing in early 1945 left Truman with feelings of doubt and guilt, as well as confusion and a need to turn to his long-time mentor Byrnes to help him formulate policy. The two men “went way back” and regularly drank and played poker together in a “good ole boys” atmosphere that transcended party politics. Truman correctly felt that he owed Byrnes a great deal and needed his wise counsel. Thus the tremendous, even decisive, influence of Byrnes over Truman in this period is not so surprising.

As for Byrnes’s motivations and agenda, they were both personal and political. At the time of the Yalta accords with the Russians, Byrnes had served as FDR’s point man and spokesman for those agreements, and had returned to America to advocate them as good and enforceable policy. Indeed it could be said that his personal and political reputation was closely intertwined with those accords. It gradually emerged, however, that the accords were not so good for the world, that they served Soviet purposes more than American, that their terms and understandings were vague and open to various interpretations, and also that the Russians intended to interpret them their own way and to act strictly in accordance with their own goals. This could hugely backfire on Byrnes, and politically this was becoming a disaster for American policy and for Byrnes personally. By 1945

it was becoming clear to American leaders that the Russians were going to be very difficult to deal with. They were already shaping Europe to fit their own designs, and had plans for Asia too, especially after their early-anticipated declaration of war upon Japan and the imminent Red Army invasion of Manchuria.

The final development of America's new superweapon offered a possible solution to these problems. It was thought that the Russians could or would be "impressed" by it, but to achieve this, (a) the bomb would have to be actually used, (b) it would have to be used in combat, (c) it would have to be used in a truly dramatic way, and (d) maximum "shock" effect could only be attained through its unannounced use and preferably over a major city. Usage of the bomb thus became more political than military in that it would make the Russians more "manageable" in Europe and Asia. American leaders with this "big stick" in hand, would "control" the Russians and achieve American goals around the world. This was the essential reasoning of Byrnes in his formulation of American foreign policy, and Truman became convinced.

The Potsdam meeting with the "Big Three" (USA, USSR, and Britain) was postponed until America could get its test results of the atomic bomb. If the results were a success, America would have the superweapon. If not, it would have to remain conciliatory and continue to compromise with the Soviets. The reports duly came in that the results were even greater than anticipated. Truman immediately took a harder line with the Russians and made the final decision to use the bomb on Japan—and regardless of surrender possibilities, loss of life, or any moral or ethical considerations—even regardless of the continued near-unanimous advice of his military and political leaders to not use the bomb and to accept Japan's surrender. Using the bomb in as dramatic a method as possible, would serve as both carrot and stick to the only emerging superpower that could challenge the United States in world affairs: a "carrot" in the "we might share this with you if..." sense, and a "stick" as in "cooperate or..."

The tragic events unfolded. Two Japanese cities were bombed and nearly 150,000 lives were taken as a result of each event—a figure including the later deaths from radiation poisoning, injuries, etc.⁶ Japan was not forced to surrender by the bomb, it was already prepared to surrender many months earlier, and America knew it but did not act on that fact. The war itself was not shortened by the bomb, in fact it was prolonged by at least several weeks if not months longer than necessary. Lives were not saved, they were wasted: hundreds of thousands of lives were squandered in order for the United States to attempt to achieve a political effect with the Soviet

Union. Ironically, the effect was ultimately not achieved at all, as the psychological impact upon the Russians was limited and they continued to go their own way in Europe, achieved their goals in Asia, and much of the world fell into their control. Far from “controlling” the Soviets, they became less trusting and more truculent, and a “cold war” soon commenced while the world became divided into two major camps engaged in a hugely expensive and dangerous arms race.

There are numerous interesting asides to this story, all worthy of further research and comment.

The Jewish physicists resisted the use of the bomb on Japan and made representations to Truman accordingly. Their somewhat genocidal view towards Germany amazingly metamorphosed into a more ethical and moral humanitarian approach once the likely target had shifted from Europe to Asia. These same physicists had also urged Truman to share the new weapon and its technology with the world—which primarily meant sharing it with the Soviet Union—in the interests of “lessening tensions” and reaching some sort of utopian world peace and amity. This advice was not taken seriously and not followed. A number of these men were later uncovered as atomic spies, passing technology secrets to the Soviets and enabling them to develop their own bomb, thus plunging the world into a state of nuclear terror lasting many decades and bringing the world very close to the brink of destruction at least once.⁷ Scores of thousands of nuclear weapons piled up around the world. That terror persists to this day, and arguably the nuclear dangers are more profound in the modern world than they were during the “cold war” period of international tension, as the technology to produce these weapons proliferates amongst smaller and “rogue” nations and regimes as scientists and technologists are more willing and able to sell the necessary secrets and components.

Ramifications of international and military law are explicitly damning. The intentional targeting of civilians and the use of poisons against anyone—radiation poisoning easily falling into this category—is prohibited. Only days after Hiroshima, the August 8, 1945 treaty was signed in London which established the legal basis for the Nuremberg and Tokyo War Crimes trials. A day later, Nagasaki too was bombed. No American military or political leader has ever been prosecuted for these crimes, while many Germans and Japanese were tried, convicted, and executed for far less serious actions. To what degree this troubles the world, or troubles the American conscience, remains unknown.

In later years, popular distaste for the use of atomic bombs began to threaten reputations. Criticisms and informed reassessments began surfac-

ing, in response to which “damage control” and “spin-doctoring” went into play by those whose place in history were at stake. Byrnes, for example, in postwar interviews attempted to shift responsibility to the “Interim Committee”—purportedly an advisory group set up by the president—for having made the recommendation to Truman to use the bomb. In actuality the committee was a sort of rubber stamp group which Byrnes dominated as the president’s personal representative, and simply relayed his own agenda up the line, blessing decisions already made elsewhere. The president’s daughter Margaret Truman in her memoir of her father’s life, claimed that a meeting occurred in Potsdam at which the president polled the opinions of his leading military men, all or most of whom—according to her account—advised use of the bomb. Later historians in their analysis of Potsdam found such a meeting impossible in the timelines, and no evidence of such a meeting has ever surfaced in any memoirs, diaries, or interviews of the alleged participants—nor has Margaret Truman responded to any of the many enquiries put to her about this issue. Stimson was persuaded to allow others to ghost-write a postwar essay under his name for Harper’s Magazine which reversed all his earlier views and recommendations regarding the bomb, to bring his “new” thinking in line with “Cold War” policy and doctrine. The later memoirs of Stimson, Byrnes, and of Truman, as well as those of others, similarly re-wrote history into a more establishment-friendly tone and outlook—often distorting past realities and sometimes inventing new lies to protect old ones.

Historians and biographers attempting to get at the truth were—and often still are—denied access to private diaries and journals of the major participants, period memoranda and documentation, and official, albeit secret reports, even though many documents and files have been routinely declassified. “Friendly” writers, however, were often granted access. This misuse of information by a supposedly “transparent” democratic government and its representatives who insisted they were hiding nothing, resulted in distortions of history and the misleading of Americans and the world whilst greatly hampering the work of researchers. All of this, of course, is completely inimical to the public’s inherent right to inspect the records of the public’s business.

Post-war policy and America’s “Cold War” place in the world were at stake. Policy-makers wanted Americans to “hang tough” on nuclear weapons, both in order to be ready to use them again and to convince perceived enemies that it had the will to do just that. The perception of an America that did not lie to its people and did not commit war crimes was necessary to sustain.

The responsibility of mass media is likewise subject to question. They had access to all the major political and military figures of the time, yet did not question American policy and actions, instead taking the government line and helped to purvey the myth surrounding the bomb and its use. Ordinary Americans trusted their government and without any information to the contrary, accepted the myths as truth.

One must wonder about the process of history. Important works on these issues are published, but the readership is surely very small. Some sixty-plus years after these events, the myths stand firmly in the minds of most Americans, while only a relatively small group of scholars and their small readership understand the reality behind them. Meanwhile, everyone is subjected to the mass-message on television and in films wherein a very different—and very false—“establishment” myth-line is purveyed. Another half century from now, or hundreds of years hence, will the myths have been dispelled or will they be just as firmly, or more firmly, established? World War Two is rife with lies and misunderstandings, and entrenched interests wish to keep it that way. A failure to understand the past can surely only be disastrous for the future.

To sum up, the atomic bombings were entirely unnecessary and were in fact acts of genocide that mostly targeted non-combatant civilians resulting in huge numbers of fatalities. To paraphrase F. J. P. Veale’s famous critique of the modern world, the usage of these indiscriminate weapons were far from being a military “advance.” They were rather a “return to barbarism.”

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Notes

- ¹ Gar Alperovitz, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb: and the Architecture of an American Myth*, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1995, p.520. The one-million figure originates from a May 15, 1945 estimate contained in a memorandum sent by former President Hoover to Secretary of War Stimson, thereafter attaining its own life and becoming a popular quote – along with other lower, and also higher, contradictory estimates
- ² Ronald Takaki, *Hiroshima: Why America Dropped the Atomic Bomb*, Little, Brown and Company, Boston, 1995, p.16 onwards.
- ³ No longer seriously disputed by historians and widely documented in countless postwar biographies and histories studying the communist espionage networks within, or closely connected to, the Manhattan Project and their passing of atomic secrets to the Soviet Union, along with treason trials and executions, e.g. those of the Rosenbergs, Klaus Fuchs, et al. Confirmation of these activities was abundantly found in the opening of the former Soviet archives from 1990 onwards.

- ⁴ A useful discussion of the origins of the “unconditional surrender” demand is contained in Takaki, pp.34-37 and elsewhere; a sort of “ad lib” comment by Roosevelt at the 1943 Casablanca conference, it was originally not used more than as a political slogan but came to crystalize within the media and popular consciousness.
- ⁵ Ably discussed in Aperovitz, pp.198-9.
- ⁶ Takaki, *op. cit.*, pp.46-7. Cited are 60,000 fatalities from the blast and approximately 70,000 from radiation etc. by 1950; Nagasaki estimates were 70,000 killed in the initial explosion and another 70,000 from radiation poisoning etc. afterwards.
- ⁷ The most famous being the 1962 Cuban missile crisis.

REVIEWS

Christopher Hitchens and His Critics

Terror, Iraq and the Left

reviewed by L.A. Rollins

Christopher Hitchens and His Critics: Terror, Iraq and the Left, edited by Simon Cottee and Thomas Cushman, New York University Press, 365 pages, 2008.

With an Introduction by the editors, this book collects many pro-war propaganda pieces written after 9/11 by former socialist and critic of American imperialism Christopher Hitchens, along with various critiques of Hitchens's warmongering, Hitchens's previously published responses to some of those critiques, and an Afterword by Hitchens with some further responses to some of his critics. (Among the critics of Hitchens included in this book are Noam Chomsky, Norman Finkelstein, Dennis Perrin, Michael Kazin, Juan Cole, and Richard Seymour.)

Hitchens has been for years a prolific writer on a variety of topics, often dealing with literature, religion, or politics. His books have included *For the Sake of Argument*, *The Missionary Position* (about Mother Teresa), *The Trial of Henry Kissinger*, *Thomas Paine's Rights of Man*, *No One Left to Lie To* (about Bill Clinton), *God Is Not Great*, and *Orwell's Victory*.

Hitchens was for many years a columnist for the liberal-to-radical magazine *The Nation*. However, sometime after 9/11, he quit his column, apparently to express his disapproval of those who, unlike him, hadn't become gung-ho for war in Afghanistan and Iraq, and more generally, against "Islamic fascism."

The editors have chosen a quotation from Hitchens's *For the Sake of Argument* as an epigraph for this book:

"The real test of a radical or revolutionary is not the willingness to confront the orthodoxy and arrogance of the rulers but the readiness to contest the illusions and falsehoods among close friends and allies."

In other words, the "real test" is not speaking truth to power, but speaking truth to the less powerful.

As a libertarian who has criticized libertarian illusions and falsehoods and a revisionist who has criticized revisionist illusions and falsehoods, I think I might pass Hitchens's "real test of a radical or revolutionary." However, I don't agree that contesting the illusions and falsehoods of one's friends and allies is the "real test of a radical or revolutionary," as important as that might be. Speaking truth to power is more important than speaking truth to the less powerful.

In any case, Hitchens presumably believes that he has passed the above-stated "real test" by vehemently and venomously attacking "Left-wing" opponents of the "War on Terror" and the invasion of Iraq. Meanwhile, Hitchens's critics, some of them his former friends, might claim that honor for themselves by virtue of their contesting of his alleged illusions and falsehoods.

So who is really contesting illusions and falsehoods, Hitchens or his critics? My impression is that it is Hitchens's critics more so than Hitchens.

Consider the invasion of Iraq. Hitchens supported the invasion, and to judge from his Afterword, still supports it. But Hitchens is an avowed secularist who advocates war against Islamic fundamentalism in support of secularism. So how does Hitchens deal with the fact that the toppling of Saddam Hussein's relatively secularist Baathist regime was, at least in some ways, a setback for secularism in Iraq?

For one thing, in "Bush's Secularist Triumph," from *Slate*, November 9, 2004, he asserts:

"George Bush may subjectively be a Christian, but he—and the US armed forces—have objectively done more for secularism than the whole of the American agnostic community combined and doubled. The demolition of the Taliban, the huge damage inflicted on the al Qaeda network, and the confrontation with theocratic saboteurs in Iraq represent huge advances for the non-fundamentalist forces in many countries."

While Hitchens might have a point, however exaggerated, vis-à-vis the Taliban and al Qaeda, his reference to Iraq is absurd and ridiculous. The



Christopher Hitchens in 2007.
Source: *Wikimedia Commons.*

“confrontation with theocratic saboteurs in Iraq” has occurred only because of the power vacuum created by the toppling of the relatively secularist Baathist dictatorship. It does not represent a huge advance for secularism in Iraq.

Nowhere in this book will you find any mention by Hitchens of Iraqi women in post-Saddam Iraq threatened with death, and in some cases apparently killed, for not “covering up” ala Muslim mode. Nor is there any mention by Hitchens of the violent attacks on booze makers and booze sellers in post-Saddam Iraq. (Booze, of course, is taboo for devout Muslims.) This omission is particularly telling given Hitchens’s notorious taste for alcohol, a matter mentioned many times in this book. (Full disclosure: I wrote this entire review while blind, stinking, staggering, asshole drunk.) If Hitchens is such a great Orwellian truth teller as he likes to pose, why does he lie by omission about such matters?

In any case, Hitchens also tries to rationalize the war in Iraq as a war for secularism by depicting Saddam Hussein as having become a religious nut in his final years. For example, Hitchens tells us (p. 116): “[...] gigantic mosques began to be built in Saddam’s own name.” Through a Google search I found reports of the building of a “Mother-of-All-Battles” mosque. However, the writers of those reports regarded Saddam’s mosque-building as a cynical use of religion for political purposes, and not as evidence of a sincere religious conversion on Saddam’s part. Furthermore, Hitchens may be lying by omission once again. A Google search confirmed that as late as 2003 Saddam was still promoting the rebuilding of Babylon, a project that would be of no interest to a Muslim fanatic. (Babylon was center of civilization back in the days of “ignorance,” as ignorant Muslims refer to pre-Islamic times.) Hitchens makes no mention of Saddam’s rebuilding of Babylon. Ignorance? Or lying by omission?

Speaking of lying by omission, why is it that, although Hitchens discusses the civil war in Algeria in the 1990s between Islamic fundamentalists and the secularist government, nowhere does he explicitly state that the 1992 elections in Algeria were cancelled by the government to prevent Islamists from coming to power democratically, legally, and peacefully? Could it be that Hitchens wants to avoid acknowledging that sometimes in the Muslim world democracy, which Hitchens purports to support, could lead to the triumph of Islamic fundamentalism and the defeat of secularism? Could it be that Hitchens wants to avoid honestly admitting the existence of such a dilemma for someone such as himself who supposedly advocates war against Islamic fundamentalism in the name of both secularism and democracy?

In any case, I'd like to point out that by advocating war, *i.e.*, the killing of people, inevitably including innocent bystanders, to advance secularism, Hitchens reveals himself to be a secularist fanatic, almost the mirror image of the religious fanatics he wants to destroy.

Hitchens might reply by bleating about "moral equivalence." Well, for the record, I'm not asserting that George W. Bush (or Christopher Hitchens) is "morally equivalent" to Osama bin Laden (or Saddam Hussein). However, I deny there is a night-and-day difference between them. Contrary to the casuistry of warmongers such as Hitchens and Sam Harris (*The End of Faith*), those who intentionally start a war knowing full well that innocent civilians will inevitably be killed (even if they are never specifically targeted), intentionally kill innocent civilians by so doing. Like the "terrorists" who directly target civilians, the warmongers have got innocent blood on their hands. They might not be "morally equivalent" to the "terrorists," but they're not the absolute opposite of them either.

Speaking of Hitchens's desire to destroy people, as I did a little bit ago, it is an irony, or maybe a hypocrisy, that Hitchens is purportedly an opponent of the death penalty. In an interview with *Reason Online*, November 2001, included in this book, Hitchens says that the first political issue he ever took a stand on was the question of capital punishment, which outraged him because it seemed to arrogate too much power to the government. And one of Hitchens's critics in this book, Michael Kazin, says that Hitchens continues to oppose the death penalty.

However, here is a passage from Hitchens's "Saving Islam from bin Laden," from *The Age*, September 5, 2002:

"It is impossible to compromise with the proponents of sacrificial killings of civilians, the disseminators of anti-Semitic filth, the violators of women and the cheerful murderers of children.

It is also impossible to compromise with the stone-faced propagandists for Bronze Age morality: morons and philistines who hate Darwin and Einstein and managed, during their brief rule in Afghanistan, to ban and erase music and art while cultivating the skills of germ warfare. If they could do that to Afghans, what might they not have in mind for us? In confronting such people, the crucial thing is to be willing and able, if not in fact eager, to kill them without pity before they get started."

Kill them without pity before they get started. Sure as hell sounds like a death penalty to me; indeed it sounds like a preemptive death penalty.

If, as seems to be the case, Hitchens advocates capital punishment for "the disseminators of anti-Semitic filth," then there is another irony, or hy-

pocrisy, here, given that Hitchens, according to the editors of this book, is a believer in freedom of expression as a universal value that always must be defended everywhere without compromise.

Back to Hitchens's lying by omission. Consider his romanticizing of the Kurds. The picture he paints of them is utterly without warts. They were brave fighters against Saddam's tyranny and defenders of democracy and "civil society." That's all. In this regard, it is useful to take Hitchens up on his recommendation of Kenneth M. Pollack's book, *The Threatening Storm: The Case for Invading Iraq*. There you can find information about the infighting between the two major Kurdish political groups, a subject never mentioned by Hitchens. Furthermore, according to Pollack, the group he calls Ansar-i-Islam and Hitchens calls Ansar-al-Islam was a Kurdish group. There's no mention of that by Hitchens in his denunciation of this group of "bin Laden clones." And Hitchens never mentions Kurdish terrorism in Turkey.

More on lying by omission. In "Why Ask Why?" from *Slate*, October 3, 2005, Hitchens asks why "so many genial Australians" had to die in a terrorist bombing in Bali. (As we all know, all Australians are genial. G'day, mate. Put another Pommie bastard on the barbie.) He answers: "Well, is it not the case that Australia sent troops to help safeguard the independence of East Timor and the elections that followed it? A neighboring country that assists the self-determination of an Indonesian Christian minority must expect to have the lives of its holidaymakers taken." Well, maybe so. But conspicuous by its absence from Hitchens's explanation is any mention of Australia's participation in "Operation Iraqi Freedom." But Hitchens doesn't want to admit that the invasion and occupation of Iraq could possibly be a reason for any subsequent terrorist attacks.

No, to admit that would be to admit that opponents of the Iraq invasion might have been right in predicting that it would provoke more terrorism. And Hitchens simply will not admit that.

Thus, after bombings in London, Hitchens, in "We Cannot Surrender," from *Mirror*, July 8, 2005, laid down the law regarding what was thinkable and what was not:

"I know perfectly well there are people thinking, and even saying, that Tony Blair brought this upon us by his alliance with George Bush. A word of advice to them: try and keep it down, will you? Or wait at least until the funerals are over. And beware of the non-sequitur: You can be as opposed to the Iraq operation as much as you like, but you can't get from this 'grievance' to the detonating of explosives at rush hour on London buses and tubes. Don't even try to connect the two. By George

Galloway's logic, British squaddies in Iraq are the root cause of dead bodies at home. How can anyone bear to be so wicked and stupid? How can anyone bear to act as a megaphone for psychotic killers?"

For Hitchens, there is only one permissible explanation for such actions: the innate and incorrigible aggressiveness of fundamentalist Muslims who are at war with all culture and all civilization. Hitchens seems to be somewhat simpleminded. He seems to think that if some violent actions by Muslims are motivated by religious fanaticism, then all violent actions by Muslims must be so motivated and there cannot possibly be any other reasons for any violent actions by Muslims.

Hitchens repeatedly depicts jihadists as religious fanatics who, because they are religious fanatics, cannot be appeased or negotiated with. The only thing to do is kill them. However, in "Inside the Islamic Mafia," from *Slate*, September 25, 2003, he includes a quotation, taken from Bernard-Henri Levy's *Who Killed Daniel Pearl?*, of a Saudi lawyer who specializes in financial transactions:

"Islam is a business,' he explains to me with a big smile. 'I don't say that because it's my job, or because I see proof of it in my office ten times a day, but because it's a fact. People hide behind Islamism. They use it like a screen saying 'Allah Akbar! Allah Akbar!' But we know that here. We see the deals and the movements behind the curtain. In one way or another it all passes through our hands. We do the paper-work. We write the contracts. And I can tell you that most of them couldn't care less about Allah. They enter Islamism because it's nothing other than a source of power and wealth, especially in Pakistan [...].'"

Is this Saudi lawyer right? Maybe so. I don't know. But my point is that Hitchens seems to accept this testimony, even though it contradicts the view of Islamists he expresses throughout the rest of his writings in this book, thereby casting doubt on the veracity of his usual war propaganda. Is Hitchens too much of a retard to realize this? Or just too brazenly deceitful to care?

Hitchens, as a supporter of the Iraq war, wanted to discredit former ambassador Joseph Wilson, the Joe Wilson who, in effect, shouted "You lie!" at George W. Bush from the Op-Ed page of *The New York Times*. Wilson had investigated some documents purporting to show that Saddam had tried to acquire uranium yellowcake from Niger, and he concluded, as did international inspectors, that they were forgeries.

Hitchens, in a piece published in *The Weekly Standard* but not included in this book and which I found by a Google search, admits to the existence of only one forged document. Meanwhile, in this book, he claims that an Iraqi ambassador visited Niger in 1999, and the only plausible explanation for this visit was to acquire uranium yellowcake. Well, maybe so. I don't know. The first time I've heard about this was in Hitchens's Afterword to this book.

In any case, Hitchens is brazenly lying when (p. 334) he says Wilson "[...] wasted an enormous amount of time on his now-disproven assertion that members of the Bush administration approached Robert Novak (a strong opponent of the war and admirer of Wilson's) in order to 'expose' his wife Valerie Plame." Novak reputedly opposed the Iraq war. Whether or not he admired Wilson, I don't know. In any case, Novak, by his own account, first received the information that Wilson's wife worked for the CIA from a "senior administration official," specifically Richard Armitage, then Undersecretary of State. (It was then confirmed for Novak by "Bush's Brain," Karl Rove.) Meanwhile, other Bush administration members, such as Lewis "Scooter" Libby, Chief of Staff for Vice-President Dick Cheney, had been leaking the information about Plame's CIA position to other journalists. For example, Judith Miller late of *The New York Times*, testified about such a conversation with Libby, and produced her notes on it, at Libby's trial for perjury and obstruction of justice. So Hitchens was lying like a Republican rug when he claimed that Wilson's claim is now disproven.

There are indications in this book that Hitchens is a fan of—gasp! horrors!—Winston Churchill, the belligerent drunk, like Hitchens. (Regarding Churchill, see, for example, *Human Smoke* by Nicholson Baker.) I wonder if Hitchens agrees with the statement attributed to Churchill: "In wartime truth is so precious that it must be attended by a bodyguard of lies." (See Anthony Cave-Brown's *Bodyguard of Lies*.)

While Hitchens seems to be a fan of warmonger Churchill, he's apparently not a fan of Charles Lindbergh. Jeff Rigenbach's book, *Why American History Is Not What They Say: An Introduction to Revisionism*, which I reviewed in the previous issue of *Inconvenient History*, includes a quotation from revisionist historian James J. Martin commenting favorably on Gore Vidal's recent political writings such as *Perpetual War for Perpetual Peace* (a title which was used by revisionist Harry Elmer Barnes in the early 1950s as the title of an anthology of revisionist writings on World War II). Here's what Hitchens says about Vidal (p. 207): "Gore Vidal's admirers of whom I used to be one and to some extent remain one, hardly notice

that his essential critique of America is based on Lindbergh and “America First”—the most conservative position available. And for Hitchens, despite his renunciation of socialism, his fond reminiscences of Margaret Thatcher, his buddying up with “neoconservatives” such as Paul Wolfowitz, etc., “conservative” is still a purely pejorative epithet. But “radical” is a good word. And of what does radicalism consist? The overthrowing of governments. Not the US government, but governments of countries in dire need of more secularism, such as Afghanistan under the Taliban or Iraq under Saddam Hussein (ha ha ha).

(Incidentally, America Firsters included liberals such as John T. Flynn and Oswald Garrison Villard, Progressives such as William Borah and Burton K. Wheeler, and Socialists such as Norman Thomas.)

Among Hitchens’s fetishes is “antifascism.” He absurdly labels al Qaeda et al. “Islamic Fascists,” but what’s fascism got to do with it? Hitchens uses the terms “fascist” and “fascism” frequently, but he never bothers to define them. Apparently, almost anyone that Hitchens strongly disapproves of and wants to drop bombs on is a “fascist.” It’s interesting to see an alleged disciple of George Orwell, author of the essay, “Politics and the English Language,” abusing the English language so outrageously in his deceitful war propaganda. Hitchens even has the chutzpah to label Islamic fanatics as “nihilists.”

Hitchens repeatedly stretches the truth via exaggeration. Thus, he refers to translators of Salman Rushdie’s novel *The Satanic Verses* who were “eviscerated.” A Google search confirmed that translators of *The Satanic Verses* were stabbed, in one case to death. But as far as I can tell, Hitchens is the only one who uses the emotive and exaggerated word “eviscerated.” Hitchens also refers to museums destroyed by the Bad Guys. A Google search produced reports that the Taliban might have destroyed thousands of non-Islamic statues in museums in Afghanistan, but not that they destroyed museums. On page 125, referring to the civil war in Algeria in the 1990s, Hitchens announces that “[...]if Algeria had fallen to the fundamentalists the bloodbath would have been infinitely worse[...].” Infinitely worse? Every living thing in the universe would have been killed? Hitchens also absurdly claims that “they” are opposed to all culture. And, recycling a bit of standard war propaganda, he claims that “they” are enemies of all civilization.

On page 340, Hitchens writes:

“Professor Juan Cole writes that he believes the late Abu-Musab al-Zarqawi to be a fictitious character. And people think it is I who owe the explanation.”

Perhaps Hitchens should explain how he managed to confuse Richard Seymour with Juan Cole. It was Seymour, not Cole, who expressed doubt about al-Zarqawi's actual existence. And perhaps Hitchens should explain how he managed to twist Seymour's expression of doubt into a flat-out assertion that al-Zarqawi is fictional. Here's a direct quotation from Seymour's "The Genocidal Imagination of Christopher Hitchens":

"There is considerable doubt about whether Zarqawi is alive, has two functioning legs, and is really in Iraq. Whether Zarqawi is a myth or a monster, the only story that obtains here is that there is no story. Saddam and Zarqawi never did have their Baghdad nuptials, however convenient the tale may be for pro-war storytelling."

There's plenty of evidence in this book that Hitchens needs to get himself a new crystal ball. Thus, for example, in "Ha Ha Ha to the Pacifists," published in *Guardian*, November 29, 2001, Hitchens predicted, "The Taliban will soon be history." Hitchens, like other warmongers, is consistently pessimistic about peace and optimistic about war. But more than eight years later the Taliban are still not history.

In "The Literal Left," from *Slate*, December 4, 2003, Hitchens told us, apropos the Iraq invasion:

"There has been no refugee exodus, for example, of the kind [the 'peaceniks'] promised."

Would Bitchin' Hitchens care, or dare, to repeat that statement now? (Nowhere in this book do I see any subsequent admission by Hitchens that there was indeed a refugee exodus.)

According to Dennis Perrin, in "Obituary for a Former Contrarian," from *Minneapolis City Pages*, July 9, 2003:

"In several pieces, including an incredibly condescending blast at Nelson Mandela, Hitch went on and on about WMD, chided readers with 'Just you wait!' and other taunts, fully confident that once the US took control of Iraq, tons of bio/chem weapons and labs would be all over the cable news nets—with him dancing a victory jig in the foreground. Now he says WMD were never a real concern and that he'd always said so. It's amazing that he'd dare to state this while his earlier pieces can be read at his website. But then, when you side with massive state power and the cynical fucks who serve it you can pretty much say anything and the People Who Matter won't care."

The "earlier pieces" referred to by Perrin are not included in this book. The only prewar claim by Hitchens related to Iraqi WMD in the pieces by Hitchens included in this book is a claim that it was absolutely certain that

Saddam had acquired some of the “weapons of genocide” and wanted to acquire more.

It’s true, as Perrin says, that after the invasion Hitchens claimed he’d never believed Saddam had much WMD at the time of the invasion. Thus, in “Weapons and Terror,” from *Slate*, May 28, 2003, Hitchens wrote:

“[...] I did write before the war, and do state again (in my upcoming book, The Long Short War) that obviously there couldn’t have been very many weapons in Saddam’s hands, nor can the coalition have believed there to be. You can’t station tens of thousands of men and women in uniform on the immediate borders of Iraq for several months if you think that a mad dictator might be able to annihilate them with a pre-emptive strike.”

But wasn’t there a massive buildup of American and other troops around Iraq’s borders in 1990 when Saddam was known to have, and still did have, chemical and biological weapons? Thus, this argument by Hitchens is questionable, yet the implication is interesting. Here Hitchens is clearly implying that Bush and Blair lied about Iraqi WMD. And yet the man who wrote a book about Bill Clinton’s lies never explicitly says Bush lied. Perhaps he just didn’t want to give opponents the satisfaction of reading that. (“Bush lied. People died.”)

Despite his poor track record as a prophet, Hitchens tenaciously clings to a rationalization for supporting the Iraq invasion on the basis that a “confrontation” with Saddam was “inevitable.” Of course, thanks to the invasion that Hitchens advocated, there’s no way this dogma can ever be put to an empirical test.

Speaking of dogma, it should be noted that Hitchens makes many claims in this book for which he provides no evidence. And, unlike many of his critics in this book, his writings contain few references to sources that a skeptic can double-check.

Hitchens brags about his ability to recognize a lethal threat when he sees one. But Hitchens sees only one lethal threat—Islamic fanaticism. It’s true, for instance, that a Muslim fanatic killed Dutch filmmaker Theo van Gogh. (But, contrary to Hitchens, van Gogh was not a descendant of the great artist, *i.e.*, Vincent van Gogh. He was a descendant of Vincent’s brother, Theo, the great art dealer.) It’s also true that it was probably Jewish fanatics who killed Francois Duprat and Alex Odeh. And it was a Christian fanatic who tried to kill Larry Flynt. But Hitchens doesn’t seem to know or care about such examples of non-Islamic fanaticism in action. Furthermore, Hitchens seems not to recognize the lethal threats of neocon-

servatism and “Armageddon Theology.” (Regarding the latter, see, for example, Pastor John Hagee’s book, *Jerusalem Countdown*.) But perhaps Hitchens is too simpleminded to comprehend a world with a variety of threats, or perhaps his war propaganda is aimed at such simpleminded people, people inclined toward what Lawrence Dennis called “monodiabolism,” the belief that there is one, and only one, “devil” at any particular time. (One last comment about this: In my opinion, Hitchens is a lethal threat, but presumably he doesn’t see a lethal threat when he looks in the mirror.)

My time and space for this review are running out, so I’ll have to finish up without discussing many aspects of Hitchens’s war propaganda. But Hitchens’s critics in this book make many points that I haven’t made in this review.

Among the things Hitchens claims to love is skepticism. However, my satirical definition of “skeptic” seems to fit Hitchens: “One who doubts what he does not want to believe and believes what he does not want to doubt.” (This definition can be found in the “Lucifer’s Lexicon” section of my book, *The Myth of Natural Rights and Other Essays*.) Readers of *Christopher Hitchens and His Critics* should have lots of salt on hand when reading it, especially when reading Hitchens’s incoherent and deceitful war propaganda.

As I mentioned before, one of the books by Hitchens was titled *Orwell’s Victory*. If I could put a title on this review, it would be *Hitchens’s Waterloo*.

Banged Up

Survival as a Political Prisoner in 21st Century Europe

reviewed by Richard Widmann

Banged Up: Survival as a Political Prisoner in 21st Century Europe, by David Irving Focal Point Publications, Windsor, England, 2008. 146pp., illustrated, with notes, indexed.

Banged Up is David Irving's autobiographical account of his arrest and 400 days of solitary confinement in an Austrian prison for having presented what amounted to inconvenient history at a lecture some 16 years prior. This handsome edition jammed with many photographs describes Irving's failed attempt to speak in Austria in November 2005 and the harrowing details of his capture by State Police with weapons drawn at the head of a man whose only crime was speaking and writing history that is deemed illegal in Austria and several other once-free European countries.

The tale of Irving's arrest is quite captivating and reads like the Mickey Spillane novels that Irving read while in the Viennese prison (his captors thought it too risky to allow him access to non-fiction). The subsequent chapters of *Banged Up* that recount his time in prison don't measure up to the story of his arrest or even ultimately the story of his release. These chapters are apparently taken directly from Irving's prison memoirs and from various letters that he penned while incarcerated for thoughtcrimes.

The tales of strange inmates and lousy conditions experienced in prison are at times redundant. Irving also does a fair amount of self-promotion throughout these chapters telling of earlier days and best-selling books, large crowds and positive reviews from around the world. While this may be justified based on today's proverbial blackout of Irving's writing, those most likely to read this volume are already aware of his glory-days as a bestselling author. We do gain some insights into the man, Irving, but those most familiar with his writings will learn little that is earth-shaking.

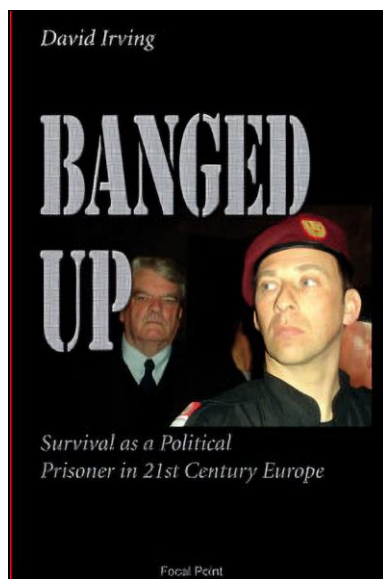
What is significantly missing from this volume is Irving on the Holocaust, the very subject that resulted in his imprisonment in the first place. There can be no doubt, that except for the hardcore anti-revisionist and anti-Irving crowd that David Irving is not a Holocaust denier. Despite the ruling in the David Irving v. Penguin Books and Deborah Lipstadt trial such a charge is both foolish and inaccurate. Irving has spent his life large-

ly as a biographer of leading personalities of the Second World War and has written incredibly little about the Holocaust. Irving's Holocaust-related troubles really began when he agreed to be a defense witness for the much maligned and currently imprisoned Ernst Zündel. His statements at this trial in 1988, his subsequent publishing of *The Leuchter Report* and his provocative comments that followed made in speeches around the world raised up an army of detractors and enemies who sought to bring him down.

Throughout *Banged Up*, Irving mentions that he has three books in the works. The first, *Churchill's War Volume 3* is said to be nearly complete. The second and third books, one a biography of Heinrich Himmler and the other, Irving's memoirs captured a significant portion of his time while he was held in Austria.

While mention of the Himmler book may raise excitement in some circles and eyebrows in others, the brief comments reveal little as to what Irving will ultimately write about the Holocaust – a topic that surely cannot be avoided in such a biography. Irving flip-flops even in this slender book leaving the readers little idea what to expect in the forthcoming book. He describes Himmler as a man who “achieved so much that was both grotesque and spectacular.” He also calls him “the evil executor of what is now called the Holocaust.” Such comments, left with no explanation leave the reader expecting that Irving will lay the blame for much of the traditional Holocaust story directly at Himmler's feet. Irving notes that Himmler's daughter Gudrun fears that he will “demolish her late father” purely in an attempt to rehabilitate himself. Irving however, asserts that such a prediction is incorrect.

Revisionists are likely to find some of Irving's statements disconcerting. He mentions for example that the diaries of Frau Himmler only refer to the Jews “two or three times.” He comments “Himmler had seemingly not mentioned the Holocaust to her.” He sums up the situation by saying



David Irving's Banged Up: Survival as a Political Prisoner in 21st Century Europe. Cover photo published with permission from Focal Point.

“Himmler had obviously been keeping his (often horrific) secrets to himself.” But here of course no evidence of the “horrific secrets” is offered. Irving also refers to the deportation of Hungarian Jews to camps in Germany (the Hungarian Jews were actually sent to camps in Poland and primarily Auschwitz). He also describes Belzec as an “extermination centre” without any explanation as to such a conclusion. Oddly he also makes a brief comment about the author of *The Destruction of the European Jews*, “I think highly of [Raul] Hilberg; in fact he shared many of my views.” Irving does not explain which views the two shared.

Also missing from this account is any explanation of the widely reported “recantation” of Irving’s Holocaust views that circulated through the world’s press immediately following his arrest. At the time, the press announced that Irving said, “I made a mistake when I said there were no gas chambers at Auschwitz.” Some theorized that Irving was posturing to reduce his sentence to speed his return trip to England; others believed that he had made a sincere recantation of earlier spoken views. Either way, this volume sheds no light on the situation.

Here and there we get glimpses of Irving’s abrasive personality, which many excuse for what he has gone through and what he has accomplished. He also makes a number of unnecessarily provocative statements about Jews. Irving seems proud for example of his announcement that “Mel Gibson was right” his most quoted statement following his release from incarceration. Irving never explains what he meant, but rather simply says it was time for “counterattack.” Such statements win Irving few friends.

Banged Up belongs on the shelves of Irving collectors and those interested in the evolution of the Orwellian tactics now practiced in once-free Europe. It reveals a terrific writer but a hardened man, perhaps made so by his enemies. It will no doubt leave revisionists angry that so little is revealed about his real thoughts on the Holocaust. It will leave the anti-Irving crowd even more certain of his “anti-Semitism.”

Clearly, we will have to wait for his Himmler biography to determine what Irving really thinks about the Holocaust. Based on the current volume, it is likely to irritate his detractors as well as the revisionists. Regardless, few interested in World War Two or Holocaust history will neglect to buy it to see what Irving has to say.

David Irving’s *Banged Up* may be purchased through irvingbooks.com.

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EDITORIAL

Death at Katyn

Richard A. Widmann

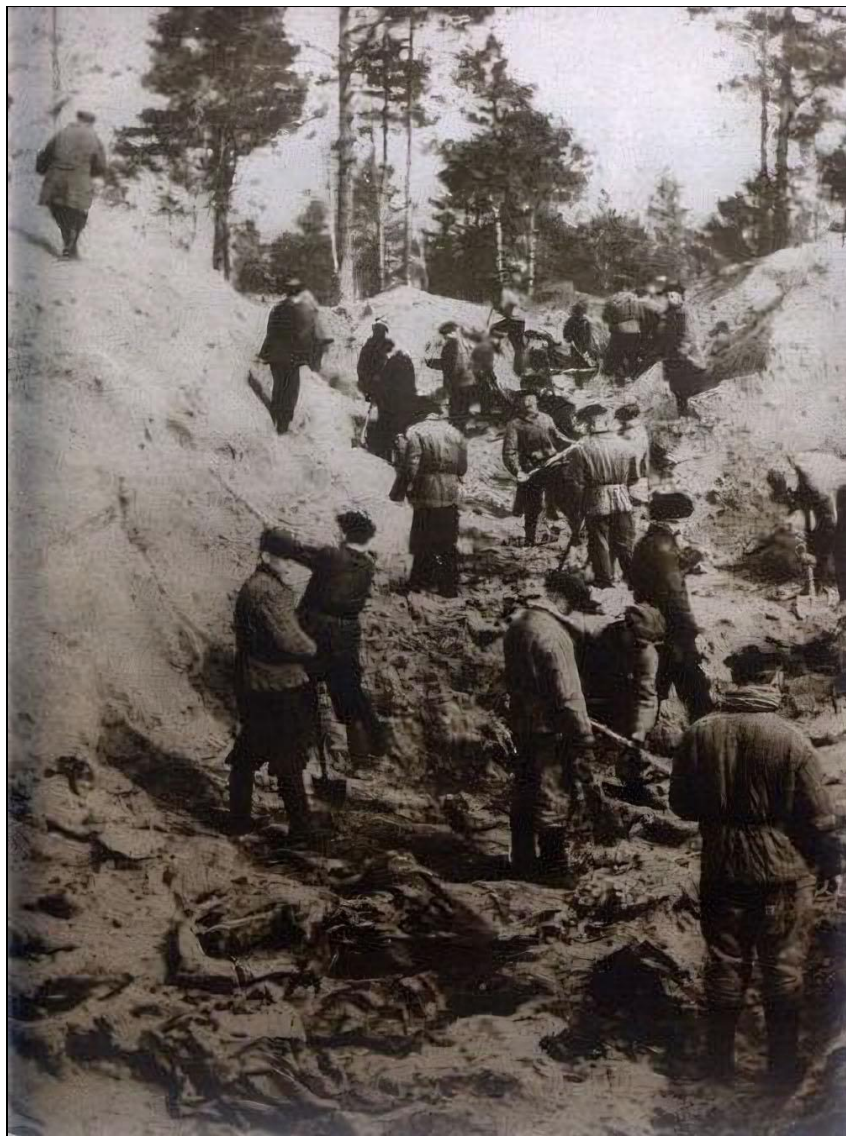
This April, a tragic plane crash took the lives of Poland's president, Lech Kaczyński and 95 others. The plane was taking them to Katyn Forest where the dignitaries were planning to commemorate the 70th anniversary of a war-time atrocity in which approximately 22,000 Polish prisoners of war were shot and buried in secret mass graves.

The recent tragedy is an important reminder not only of the horrors of 'total war' but also of the falsifications and propaganda utilized during the Second World War. While World War Two holds a fascination for a significant portion of the population, with dozens of books and movies produced on the subject each year, the question of World War Two revisionism is still a touchy one. Why would anyone question what appears to be the clearest example of good and evil in modern history? How could the actions of the "greatest generation" be called into question? What ulterior motives must one have to dare to doubt the official history as pronounced by the victors?

While the Katyn Forest Massacre was only one episode in a war which ultimately claimed tens of millions of lives, much can be learned by reconsidering it and the cover-up that followed.

The Soviet invasion of Poland began on September 17, 1939 just 16 days after the German invasion from the West. The Red Army encountered minimal resistance as the Polish Army was already overwhelmed attempting to hold off the Nazi advance from the opposite direction. In fact, many Polish units surrendered to the Red Army with no resistance. The units that did resist were quickly overcome. With much of the Polish Army in flight from the West some 227,000 men ended up in Soviet captivity.

On June 22, 1941 the Nazis invaded the USSR, including the Polish territory it took in 1939. The Soviets quickly released the Polish soldiers they held in captivity to form a new Polish army that would fight the Nazis under Soviet command. As the former POWs gathered, it quickly became apparent that their former officers were missing. Polish authorities began to officially inquire into the whereabouts of their missing officers.



*Photo from 1943 exhumation of mass grave of Polish officers killed by NKVD in Katyń Forest in 1940. Photo is in the public domain. Source: Andrzej Leszek Szczęśniak (1989). *Katyń: Tło historyczne, fakty, dokumenty*, s. 106, Warszawa: Wydawnictwa ALFA. ISB*

The Polish Ambassador was given assurances by Molotov and Stalin himself that a search was underway for the missing officers (estimated at 15,000 at the time). On December 1, 1941, Polish authorities sent General Sikorski to Moscow with a list of the names of many of the missing. Stalin, who met with Sikorski, suggested that the missing men may in fact have escaped to Manchuria. He further declared that a search for the missing thousands would be extended to the Arctic Circle.

The *Wehrmacht* War Crimes Bureau, a Nazi bureau which was established for the purpose of investigating War Crimes had begun to hear reports of a mass execution of Polish officers by the Soviets by the Summer of 1941. In February 1943 the German occupation authorities began to search the area around Katyn Forest. On April 12th, the Germans announced that a horrible atrocity had occurred. By June of 1943 the searchers had unearthed 4,143 bodies. Each body showed that they had been executed with a bullet in the neck at the base of the skull.

The Germans organized a team of medical and legal experts from twelve neutral countries to visit Katyn and report on their findings. The evidence became clear that the Soviet NKVD had exterminated the missing Polish officers.

But the story did not end here. The Soviets now announced that the prison camp in which they had held the officers (no need for an Arctic exploration!) had in fact been overrun by Nazi forces in July of 1941. The tale continued that it was in fact the Nazis who executed the officers with the purpose of falsely accusing the Soviets.

The Soviets continued their cover-up by refusing to allow the International Red Cross to investigate the matter. With the war in progress, the story largely passed to the back pages with many believing the charge against our Allies, the Soviets, was simply a bit of the propaganda of Joseph Goebbels.

The matter was not over, however. At the conclusion of the war the victorious Allies put the Nazi Leadership on trial in Nuremberg. While ostensibly a trial by an "International Military Tribunal," the victors did not have to answer for atrocities that would certainly have resulted in death sentences had they been committed by the vanquished Nazi leadership. After the initial indictment was signed by the Nuremberg prosecutors, including a charge that the Nazis murdered 945 Polish officers in Katyn, near Smolensk, the Soviets demanded that the indictment be rewritten. The passage should in fact charge the Nazis with the murder of 11,000 Polish officers at Katyn. The Soviets charged that the Nazis had perpetrated the crime and had increased the number originally suggested by 1000 per cent.

The Nuremberg Tribunal assigned to the Soviets the task of introducing all the evidence of German atrocities in Eastern Europe. With regard to Katyn the Soviets introduced "testimony" which consisted of "written statements" said to have been signed by "eyewitnesses." These testimonies were in fact only "quoted" in a "report" and read aloud by the Soviet prosecutor. The original documents were never attached to the report. A so-called "forensic report" was also introduced into evidence. It was the only forensic report introduced into evidence at Nuremberg.

To the credit of the International Military Tribunal, the Katyn indictment did not appear in the final verdicts at Nuremberg. The United States Congress decided to investigate the matter in 1951 and 1952 and found that the Soviets were indeed the perpetrators. Still, the matter of the Katyn Massacre was unclear for many. Revisionist scholar F.J.P. Veale published his analysis of the crime in 1958.

It was not until 1989 that Soviet scholars admitted that Stalin himself had ordered the massacre. In 1990, Mikhail Gorbachev admitted the execution had been carried out by the NKVD and confirmed the existence of two additional burial sites at Mednoye and Piatykhatty.

Despite these high-level admissions it is not unusual to still see charges leveled against the Nazis for this atrocity. Several Russian politicians and commentators continue to support the Soviet tale that the Poles were executed by the Germans.

Others even in the English-speaking world suggest that the Nazis somehow coordinated the effort with the Soviets or otherwise allowed the Soviets to carry out the murders. In 2007 and 2008 Russian newspapers published stories implicating the Nazis for the crime.

By late April 2010 in the aftermath of the latest tragedy in Katyn, the Russians released for the first time documents which prove that the NKVD executed 22,000 Polish officers and other prominent citizens on Stalin's orders. Moscow continues however to refuse to publish other important documents regarding this event.

The Katyn Forest tragedy of 1940 reveals among other things that history is not black and white. An Allied power committed a thoroughly documented crime against unarmed POWs. They also produced falsified witness testimony and a phony "forensic report" to cover up their crime and utilized the power and authority of the tribunal at Nuremberg to hammer home their falsified version of the truth. One is forced to consider what else may have falsified by the Soviets at Nuremberg and elsewhere. There can be little doubt that revelations regarding such matters remain quite inconvenient to those in positions of power.

Sources

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PAPERS

Goebbels on the Jews, Part 2

Thomas Dalton

In Part 1 of this article in the preceding issue of INCONVENIENT HISTORY (starting on page 14 of this volume), I gave a brief explanation of the history of the diaries of Joseph Goebbels, the number-two man in the Nazi hierarchy after Hitler himself. For more than 20 years Goebbels maintained a detailed personal diary that included reflections on all aspects of the war. Of special interest are his comments on Jews and the 'Jewish Question'. These are striking because, as we are seeing, they indicate a long-term plan of evacuation and deportation, and virtually no sign of large-scale murder.

This, of course, would radically alter our conception of the Holocaust. In a private diary one would normally expect to find an honest and explicit account of such a momentous event, but we see no reference to it. Given this fact, we are faced with two possible explanations: (1) Goebbels knew all about the murder of the Jews, but never mentioned it at all, or only referred to it obliquely in a kind of personal 'code language.' Or, (2) there was in fact no mass murder going on. An analysis of the diary entries, in conjunction with relevant comments by Hitler, and in light of other alleged and actual contemporaneous events, can perhaps resolve this question for us.

The diaries are extensive, encompassing 29 volumes of roughly 500 pages each, in the German original. In order to extract the most relevant comments by Goebbels, I conducted an exhaustive study of the key portion of the diary, running from *Kristallnacht* (November 1938) through the Hungarian deportation of Jews in mid-1944. In all, this constitutes 123 separate entries, the majority of which have never appeared in English.

I continue now with the chronological discussion, beginning at the start of 1942.

On the orthodox account of the Holocaust, the extermination of the Jews accelerated in January 1942. Chelmno Camp, which had just commenced in December of the previous year, increased its toll, and Auschwitz allegedly began gassing its first few thousand Jews. The infamous Wannsee conference occurred on January 20, but in spite of the alleged on-going

actions at the two camps it was merely “a key stepping-stone on the path to that terrible genocidal finality,” according to Kershaw (2000: 493).

Three days after Wannsee, Hitler again remarked on the Nazi plan to evacuate the Jews and how, historically speaking, things have been much worse for them:

“If I withdraw 50,000 Germans from Volhynia [a region in western Ukraine], that’s a hard decision to take, because of the suffering it entails. [...] If I think of shifting the Jew, our bourgeoisie becomes quite unhappy: ‘What will happen to them?’ Tell me whether this same bourgeoisie bothered about what happened to our own compatriots who were obliged to emigrate?”

One must act radically. When one pulls out a tooth, one does it with a single tug, and the pain quickly goes away. The Jew must clear out of Europe. Otherwise, no understanding will be possible between Europeans. It’s the Jew who prevents everything. When I think about it, I realize that I’m extraordinarily humane. At the time of the Popes, the Jews were mistreated in Rome. Until 1830, eight Jews mounted on donkeys were led once a year through the streets of Rome. For my part, I restrict myself to telling them they must go away. If they break their pipes on the journey, I can’t do anything about it. But if they refuse to go voluntarily, I see no other solution but extermination. [...] In the POW camps, many are dying. It’s not my fault. I didn’t want either the war or the POW camps. Why did the Jew provoke this war?” (1953/2000: 235-236)

He continued with this theme on January 27:

“The Jews must pack up, disappear from Europe. Let them go to Russia. Where the Jews are concerned, I’m devoid of all sense of pity.



Joseph Goebbels, Reichsminister für
Volksaufklärung und Propaganda.
Photo is in the public domain.
Source: Wikimedia Commons.

They'll always be the ferment that moves peoples one against the other. They sow discord everywhere, as much between individuals as between peoples.

They'll also have to clear out of Switzerland and Sweden. It's where they're to be found in small numbers that they're most dangerous. Put 5,000 Jews in Sweden—soon they'll be holding all the posts there. Obviously, that makes them all the easier to spot.” (Ibid.: 260)

Three days later, on January 30, Hitler gave another of his annual anniversary speeches. He repeated his prophecy of the *Vernichtung* of the Jews, and spoke of their “disappearance” (*verschwindet*). Once again we must ask: are these the words of a man with an “obsession with secrecy”? Would Hitler really make such claims before a huge audience, if he knew that mass murder was underway?

Goebbels then continues with the following diary entries:

Feb 5, 1942 (II.3.254-255) **

“The Jewish Question is again giving us a headache; this time, however, not because we have gone too far, but because we are not going far enough. Among large sections of the German people the idea is gaining headway that the Jewish Question cannot be regarded as solved until all Jews have left the Reich (verlassen haben).”

Feb 15, 1942 ¹ (II.3.320-321) **

“Bolshevism is a doctrine of the devil, and anybody who has once suffered from this scourge doesn't want anything to do with it again. The sufferings of the Russian people under Bolshevism are indescribable. This Jewish terrorism must be rooted out, stump and stem, (ausgerottet, mit Stumpf und Stiel) from all of Europe. That is our historic task. World Jewry will suffer a great catastrophe at the same time as Bolshevism. The Führer once more expressed his determination to pitilessly clear out (aufzuräumen) the Jews from Europe. There must be no squeamish sentimentalism about it. The Jews have deserved the catastrophe that has now overtaken them. Their destruction (Vernichtung) will go hand in hand with the destruction (Vernichtung) of our enemies. We must hasten this process with cold ruthlessness. We shall thereby render an inestimable service to a humanity tormented for thousands of years by the Jews. This uncompromising anti-Semitic attitude must prevail among our own people despite all objectors. The Führer expressed

this idea vigorously and repeated it afterward to a group of officers; let them put that in their pipes and smoke it."

The 'rooting out' phrase was translated by Lochner as "radically eliminated"—an unnecessary exaggeration. Goebbels also refers to the *Vernichtung* of the enemy nations—which obviously cannot mean total elimination or murder, but rather domination and defeat. It could hardly be clearer.

Feb 18, 1942 (II.3.335) **

"In the evening I had a look at the Polish-Yiddish motion picture, The Dybuk. This film is intended to be a Jewish propaganda picture. Its effect, however, is so anti-Semitic that one can only be surprised to note how little the Jews know about themselves and how little they realize what is repulsive to a non-Jewish person and what is not. Looking at this film I realized once again that the Jewish race is the most dangerous one that inhabits the globe, and that we must show them no mercy and no indulgence. This riff-raff must be rooted out, stump and stem (ausgerottet, mit Stumpf und Stiel). Otherwise, it won't be possible to bring peace to the world."

Here again Lochner exaggerates: "eliminated and destroyed." (One would at least expect a consistent translation of identical phrases.)

In late February, Hitler discussed the Jewish problem using his infamous biological terminology:

"The discovery of the Jewish virus is one of the greatest revolutions that have taken place in the world. The battle in which we are engaged today is of the same sort as the battle waged, during the last century, by Pasteur and Koch. How many diseases have their origin in the Jewish virus! [...] We shall regain our health only by eliminating the Jew." (1953/2000: 332)

Belzec began operation in March 1942, and by the end of the month had processed at least 35,000 people²—who were either killed in gas chambers running on diesel exhaust, or deloused and shipped on further east, depending on your perspective. Another 30,000 were allegedly killed at Auschwitz and Chelmno.

Mar 6, 1942 (II.3.423, 425-426) **

"A frontal attack on black markets was made in the [British] House of Commons. No bones are made about the fact that Jews were chiefly implicated in profiteering in the food market. Heading the procession were the Jewish immigrants who went from Germany to England. Jews

always remain the same. You must either stigmatize them with a yellow star, or put them in concentration camps, or shoot them, or else let them saturate all public life with corruption, especially during a war. There is no halfway measure.

An SD [Sicherheitsdienst] report informed me about the situation in occupied Russia. It is, after all, more unstable than was generally assumed. The partisan danger is increasing week by week. The partisans are in command of large area in occupied Russian and are conducting a regime of terror there. The national movements, too, have become more insolent than was at first imagined. That applies as much to the Baltic States as to the Ukraine. Everywhere the Jews are busy inciting and stirring up trouble. It is therefore desirable that many of them must pay with their lives for this (mit ihrem Leben bezahlen müssen). Anyway, I am of the opinion that the greater the number of Jews liquidated (liquidiert), the more consolidated will be the situation in Europe after this war. One must have no mistaken sentimentality about it. The Jews are Europe's misfortune; they must somehow be removed (beseitigt), otherwise we are in danger of being removed (beseitigt) by them."

First paragraph: "shooting," or murder, is only one of at least three options. Genocide is apparently not an alternative. Second: Lochner offers up "eliminated" for the term *beseitigt*, which simply means 'removed.' Again, we see the phrase "pay with their lives" (this is the only other occurrence, apart from 13 December 1941), but here Goebbels explicitly refers to "many" of the Jews—not most, not all. And it is merely "desirable," not essential or mandatory. Furthermore, if a "greater number" are to be liquidated—made fluid, removed—then clearly some percentage will remain. Hence no total elimination. In the well-known entry of March 27, Goebbels suggests that only 60% will be liquidated. For these, Madagascar is still an alternative, as we see below:

Mar 7, 1942 (II.3.431-432) **

"I read a detailed report from the SD and police regarding a final solution of the Jewish Question. Any final solution involves a tremendous number of new viewpoints. The Jewish Question must be solved within a pan-European frame. There are 11 million Jews still in Europe. They will have to be concentrated later, to begin with, in the East; possibly an island, such as Madagascar, can be assigned to them after the war. In any case there can be no peace in Europe until the last Jews are shut off from (ausgeschaltet) the continent.

That, of course, raises a large number of exceedingly delicate questions. What with those related to Jews? In-laws of Jews? Persons married to Jews? Evidently, we still have quite a lot to do, and undoubtedly a multitude of personal tragedies will ensue within the framework of the solution of this problem. But that is unavoidable. The situation is now ripe for a final settlement of the Jewish Question. Later generations will no longer have the will power or the instinctive alertness. That's why we are doing a good work in proceeding radically and consistently. The task we are assuming today will be an advantage and a boon to our descendants."

For Lochner, *ausgeschaltet* means, once again, "eliminated." He evidently is quite fond of this word. Strange, since the German language has the verb *eliminieren*, and presumably Goebbels would have used it if that in fact was his intended meaning.³

Mar 16, 1942 (II.3.478) **

"I read a report of the SD about the situation in the occupied East. The activity of partisans has increased noticeably during recent weeks. They are conducting a well-organized guerrilla war. It is very difficult to get at them because they are using such terrorist methods in the area occupied by us that the population is afraid of collaborating with us loyally any longer. The spearheads of this whole partisan activity are the political commissars and especially the Jews. It has therefore proven necessary once again to shoot more Jews. There won't be any peace in these areas as long as any Jews are active there. Sentimentality is out of place here. Either we must renounce the lives of our own soldiers, or we must uncompromisingly prevent further propaganda by criminal and chaotic elements in the hinterland."

Mar 20, 1942 (II.3.513) **

"Finally we talked about the Jewish Question. Here the Führer is as uncompromising as ever. The Jews must be got out of Europe (aus [...] heraus), if necessary by applying the most brutal methods."

The following entry is probably the most widely quoted of all:

Mar 27, 1942 (II.3.561) **

"Beginning with Lublin, the Jews in the General Government are now being evacuated (abgeschoben) eastward. The procedure is a pretty barbaric one and not to be described here more definitely. Not much

will remain of the Jews. On the whole it can be said that about 60 percent of them will have to be liquidated (liquidiert) whereas only about 40 percent can be used for forced labor.

The former Gauleiter of Vienna, who is to carry this measure through, is doing it with considerable circumspection and according to a method that does not attract too much attention. A judgment is being visited upon the Jews that, while barbaric, is fully deserved by them. The prophecy which the Führer made about them for having brought on a new World War is beginning to come true in a most terrible manner. One must not be sentimental in these matters. If we did not fight the Jews, they would destroy us (vernichten). It's a life-and-death struggle between the Aryan race and the Jewish bacillus. No other government and no other regime would have the strength for such a global solution of this question. Here, too, the Führer is the undismayed champion of a radical solution necessitated by conditions, and therefore inexorable. Fortunately a whole series of possibilities presents itself for us in war-time that would be denied us in peacetime. We shall have to profit by this.

The ghettos that will be emptied in the cities of the General Government will now be refilled with Jews thrown out (ausgeschoben) of the Reich. This process is to be repeated from time to time. There is nothing funny in it for the Jews, and the fact that Jewry's representatives in England and America are today organizing and sponsoring the war against Germany must be paid for dearly by its representatives in Europe—and that's only right."

Dramatic wording, to be sure. But we now understand the likely meanings of 'liquidation' and 'radical solution' (see Part 1). And we have yet more evidence that *vernichten* is not mass murder—would the Jews really kill every German simply by remaining unopposed, and living amongst them? Of course not. But they could destroy the character and integrity of traditional German society. The third paragraph is rarely cited by traditionalists; it too clearly indicates a systematic deportation process, including potentially long-term confinement. This is inconsistent with a high-speed, industrialized scheme of gassing and mass murder.

The following two entries are not in the Lochner book. The second was apparently among the missing entries, and thus could not have been considered. But the first was within his available pages—evidently it did not fit well into the desired picture.

Mar 29, 1942 (II.3.576)

"In large part the Jews are once again being evacuated (evakuiert) from Berlin. About one thousand per week are shipped (verfrachtet) to the East. The suicide rate under this Jewish evacuation is extraordinarily high. This does not bother me, however. The Jews have earned no other fate than that which they suffer today. We warned them for so long, and so urgently, not to continue on in their previous way. They ignored our warning, and must pay for that now."

Apr 10, 1942 (II.4.76-77)

"Domestically speaking, not much to report. Against all expectations, the [German] suicide rate is declining extraordinarily. Today no one has the desire to freely end his life. Only among the Jews are suicides rapidly increasing. That is welcome too. In Berlin we now have a little over 40,000 Jews. This is of course a sharp decline from the pre-Nazi state, but it's still too many. At the moment I cannot conduct rigorous evacuations (Evakuierungen), because the strong remaining Jews are needed for the armaments process. But here too a remedy will surely be found in the coming weeks."

So it seems likely that suicide, typhus, and reprisal killings by Lithuanians and others in the East account for a significant number of the total Jewish fatalities. If we add in periodic shootings by the Germans, these four factors may well account for nearly all the deaths claimed by revisionists—let us say, in the range of 300,000 to 600,000.

In April, Sobibor comes online; it processes 20,000 in its first month. Four of the six 'extermination camps' are now underway.

Apr 14, 1942 (II.4.95) **

"The Grynzpan trial is now to start in the middle of May. I still have a few preparations to make. Preparations by the Department of Justice are in some respects not very clever psychologically. Thus, for instance, the problem of homosexuality, which really isn't under discussion, has been drawn into the trial procedure, and the question of Jewish evacuations (Evakuierungen) is also to be dealt with publicly. I think this is about as bungling as possible [...]. I shall see to it that these two sets of questions are not raised in court at all. All the other preparations were made in accordance with my directives and, if carried out, will undoubtedly make the trial a perfect success."

Apr 19, 1942 (II.4.130)

“Very strong discussions are held in the relevant circles regarding what must happen with the mixed-race Jews. Undoubtedly they constitute a serious obstacle for the radical solution of the Jewish Question. On the one hand it is argued that they should be sterilized, and on the other that they should be deported (ausgewiesen). The positions are not yet clarified enough for one to decide what to do.”

Apr 20, 1942 (II.4.134) **

“The most recent act of sabotage [in France] against a German military train which resulted in several deaths will be punished with severe reprisals. The number of people to be shot will be doubled, and over a thousand Communists and Jews will be put into freight cars and shipped (verfrachtet) to the East. There they will soon cease to see any fun in disturbing Germany’s policies for order in Europe.”

Apr 24, 1942 (II.4.159-160)

“Some statistics are given to me on the proportion of Jews in American radio, film, and press. The percentage is truly frightening. Jewry controls 100% of the film business, and between 90 and 95% of press and radio. These facts explain the dizzying and spirited warfare of the other side. The Jews are not as clever as they would like to believe. If they are in danger, they become the stupidest of devils.

Nothing new is reported in the East. The Bolsheviks have already responded to our propaganda and portray our troops as cannibals. It’s a shame how the other side slanders and lies. But wherever you look, in the background stands the manipulating international Jewry. We will be doing humanity a great service if we permanently remove them (entfernen) from public life and stick them in quarantine.”

Striking statistics on American media. The figures have not changed much to this day. One need only recall the Joel Stein article from 2008, in which Jewish dominance of Hollywood is virtually complete.⁴ Of the five major US media conglomerates, every one has either a Jewish CEO or president, or both.⁵ Of the top seven American newspapers, six are Jewish owned or oriented.⁶

“Removal and quarantine” doesn’t sound very much like mass murder. Perhaps this is why Lochner bypassed the above entry.

Apr 27, 1942 (II.4.184) **

"I talked to the Führer once more in detail about the Jewish Question. His attitude is unrelenting. He wants, under all circumstances, to push the Jews out (herausdrängen) of Europe. That is right. The Jews have brought so much misery to our continent that the severest punishment meted out to them is still too mild. Himmler is presently implementing a large resettlement (Umsiedlung) of Jews from German cities to the eastern ghettos."

The last sentence above was inexplicably left out by Lochner. But the following entry is worse:

Apr 29, 1942 (II.4.201) **

"The SD gave me a police report on conditions in the East. The danger of the Partisans continues to exist in unmitigated intensity in the occupied areas. The Partisans have, after all, caused us very great difficulties during the winter, and these difficulties have by no means ceased with the beginning of spring. Short shrift (kurzen Prozess) is made of the Jews in all eastern occupied areas. Tens of thousands must bite the dust, and the Führer's prophecy is fulfilled for them, that Jewry has to pay for inciting a new World War with the complete removal (Ausrottung) of their race."

Here is the last sentence in the original:

"Zehntausend müssen daran glauben, und an ihnen erfüllt sich die Prophezeiung des Führers, dass das Judentum einen von ihm entfachten neuen Weltkrieg mit der Ausrottung seiner Rasse wird bezahlen müssen."

Even those readers with no knowledge of German should be able to discern that the following Lochner translation is dishonest: "Tens of thousands of them are liquidated."

A short comment by Hitler in mid-May:

"It does not occur to any of those who howl when we transport a few Jews to the east that the Jew is a parasite, and as such is the only human being capable of adapting himself to any climate, and of earning a living just as well in Lapland as in the tropics." (1953/2000: 485)

May 11, 1942 (II.4.273) **

"[Gerhard] Schach reported to me on questions regarding the gau of Berlin. We must deal again with the Jewish problem. There are still

40,000 Jews in Berlin and despite the heavy blows dealt them they are still insolent and aggressive. It is exceedingly difficult to shove them off (abzuschieben) to the East because a large part of them are at work in the munitions industry, and because the Jews are to be evacuated (abgeschoben) only by families."

May 15, 1942 (II.4.293) **

"A report from Paris informs me that a number of those who staged the last acts of terror have been found. About 90 percent [sic: 99%] of them are eastern Jews [Ostjuden]. A more rigorous regime is now to be applied to these Jews. As far as I am concerned, it would be best if we either evacuated (abschöben) or liquidated (liquidierten) all eastern Jews still remaining in Paris. By nature and race they will always be our natural enemies anyway."

May 17, 1942 (II.4.305)

"We are trying now to evacuate (evakuieren) the remaining Jews in Berlin to the East, on a larger scale. One third of all Jews living in Germany are located in the capital. This is of course intolerable in the long run. Mainly it's due to the fact that, in Berlin, relatively many Jews are working in the military-industrial establishment, and, per regulation, neither they nor their families can be evacuated (evakuiert). I am seeking a repeal of this regulation, and will try to remove (aus [...] herauszubringen) all Jews from Berlin who are not directly engaged in war industries."

May 24, 1942 (II.4.350, 355)

"We see in this compilation [of facts] how correct our Jewish policy is, and how necessary it is to continue, in the most radical way, our old course of action, and to ensure that the 40,000 Jews still in Berlin, who in reality are freed felons with nothing left to lose, are quickly either concentrated (konzentriert) or evacuated (evakuiert). The best thing, of course, would be liquidation (Liquidierung).

[The Führer] recognizes in Stalin a man of stature who towers above the democratic figures of the Anglo-Saxon powers. He naturally also knows that the Jews are determined, under all circumstances, to bring victory in this war, because they know that defeat also means for them personal liquidation (Liquidation). It is a world-struggle of enormous dimensions that we must confront if the Reich is not to be destroyed

(zerstört). *Only now are we clear what Stalin, as a front-man for the Jews, had in fact prepared in this war against the Reich.*"

Heavy use of 'liquidation' in the past few passages. Goebbels further seems to here distinguish this from the process of evacuation. Either it is a different form or degree of movement (perhaps en masse), or it may in fact refer to killings, at least in the current context.

May 28, 1942 (II.4.386)

"Ten Jews in concentration camps or under the earth are dearer to me than one in freedom. One must proceed quite unsentimentally. Today we lead a life-and-death struggle, and he who wins will be the one that most vigorously defends his personal and political existence."

The vast majority of concentration camps were not 'extermination camps'—even on the orthodox view—and imprisonment (in 1942) was not a death sentence. Given this fact, Goebbels seems to accept either imprisonment or death equally, since both remove the Jews from society. There is no preference for one over the other. If mass extermination really was underway, he would not have written this.

May 29, 1942 (II.4.393)

"In the Reich one can observe here and there the first signs of anti-government propaganda. It certainly comes from the Jews. The Jews who remain in the Reich naturally represent an extremely dangerous contingent. They really belong in prison. The fact that they can roam freely means an increasing danger for the public, and an increasing risk. I am constantly trying to transport (verfrachten) as many Jews as possible to the East; once they are out of reach (aus der Reichweite heraus), they can then do us no harm, at least for the time being."

Again, clear indication of actual deportation as, if nothing else, a short-term solution to the Jewish problem. This thought continues in the next striking entry:

May 30, 1942 (II.4.406)

"Germans are involved in subversive movements only if the Jews tempt them. Therefore one must liquidate (liquidieren) the Jewish danger, cost it what it will. Given how few Jews can in reality adjust themselves to Western European life, one sees that, where they are led back into the ghetto, they quickly revert to form. West European civilization represents only an external coat of paint to them. There is also the Jewish es-

sence, which works with a dangerous brutality and vindictiveness. Therefore the Führer does not at all wish that the Jews should be evacuated (evakuiert) to Siberia. There, under the harshest living conditions, they would undoubtedly develop again a strong life-element. He would much prefer to resettle (aussiedeln) them in central Africa. There they would live in a climate that would certainly not make them strong and resistant. In any case, it is the Führer's goal to make Western Europe completely Jew-free. Here they may no longer have their homeland."

This seems to be the only instance of a contemplated deportation to continental Africa; Hitler had referred to Siberia already back in mid-1941.⁷ But evidently the latter was now out of the question—too mild a climate. (Is it really that bad in central Africa?) In any case we again see the elements here of a true ‘final solution’: deportation into temporary eastern ghettos, and then ultimately out of the Eurasian land mass altogether.

But perhaps most striking is the fact that the physical-extermination process was allegedly well underway at this point. At least 2 million Jews had been killed by May 1942, on the orthodox view. In his diary Goebbels is not just substituting ‘deported’ for ‘killed’; he would have to be inventing entire conversations, phony alternate plans, false Hitler quotes—all for himself! This of course is absurd. Goebbels clearly knew nothing of mass murder.

Jun 17, 1942 (II.4.544)

"Jewish influence in American public life, particularly in politics, is enormous. Roosevelt is, so to say, the front man for international Jewry, and thus they see the USA as a praiseworthy country, to some extent."

In July 1942, Treblinka begins operation. It processes an astounding 160,000 Jews in its first month.

Aug 21, 1942 (II.5.378)

"The responsible Higher-SS leader reported to me on the conditions in the [Warsaw] ghetto. The Jews are now in large part evacuated (evakuiert) and established in the East. This is quite generous to them. Here the Jewish Question is tackled in the right place, without sentimentality and without much consideration. Only in this way can the Jewish problem be solved."

In September the last of the six ‘extermination camps,’ Majdanek, allegedly begins gassing Jews, at a rate of about 3,000 per month. Chelmno is in

the process of shutting down, and thus this one month—September 1942—is the only month that all six camps are in operation at the same time.

Sep 15, 1942 (II.5.505)

“Schirach gave a speech to the European Youth Congress, that meets now in Vienna. [...] Among other things, Schirach explained that he had evacuated (evakuiert) thousands and thousands of Jews out of Vienna and into the eastern ghettos.”

Oct 1, 1942 (II.6.37)

“Extraordinarily sharp and aggressive venting against the Jews [by the Führer], whom he threatens with destruction (Vernichtung), so far as they run into our area.

I drive back to the Chancellery with the Führer. Once again, we talk through the Jewish Question. Here the Führer takes the same radical standpoint I do. He is also of the opinion that we must completely deport the Jews out of the Reich (restlos herausschaffen), and above all from Berlin.”

By the end of October, Treblinka has allegedly gassed some 600,000 Jews—far more than any other camp to date. Belzec has gassed 400,000; Auschwitz a mere 150,000. And yet we only see continual talk of deportations and evacuations. Either Goebbels is continuing to make up periodic lies for his own benefit, or no gassings occurred.

The end of 1942 brings an unusually heavy discussion of the Jews and the *Judenfrage*. Interesting reference to rumors of “terrible atrocities” committed in Poland, and the generally increasing rate of attention given by western journalists. Such rumors had been reported in major newspapers for some months by this time. The *New York Times* reported as early as July 2 on the Bund Report, citing the “slaughter of Jews in Poland.” On July 10 the *London Times* ran the story “German record in Poland,” referring to the “wholesale extermination of the Jews” and specifically naming the Belzec camp. On November 25 the *New York Times* ran “Himmler program kills Polish Jews.” And in the *London Times*, December 4, we read of a “deliberate plan for extermination” of the Polish Jews. As I explained in Part 1, it appears that the strategic value of internal rumors may have backfired in the international arena.

Nov 27, 1942 (II.6.344)

“Also, the Jews have again become completely impudent, even in the Reich area. I will therefore take care that, at least from Berlin if possible, they will be quickly pushed out (abgeschoben). Next week a transport of 5,000 Berlin Jews will leave for the Eastern zone.”

Dec 6, 1942 (II.6.401)

“A new suggestion was made on the liquidation (Liquidierung) of Jewish marriages. After that one wants to go to compulsive separations, and otherwise, as means to obtain evacuation (Evakuierung). I do not want to begin this method at the moment. It has caused so much unrest and confusion in public opinion, so as to not be worthwhile, at least in the present. Finally, the Führer has also given me an order to first take care that the unprivileged full Jews are deported (herausgeschafft) from Germany. Once they are all gone, we can then approach the problem of the remaining Jews.”

Dec 9, 1942 (II.6.415)

“The Jews throughout the world mobilize against us. They tell of terrible atrocities against the Jewish race which we allegedly allowed to happen in Poland, and now they threaten us in London and Washington to inflict a terrible punishment on all guilty parties after the war. That still cannot prevent us from bringing about a radical solution to the Jewish Question. In any case, we will just let this threat be. The Jews will probably not have anything else special to report from Europe.”

Dec 12, 1942 (II.6.434)

“The atrocity propaganda concerning Poland and the Jewish Question is taking on abnormal forms on the other side. We will not, I fear, be finished with this thing in the long run by remaining silent. We already have to answer to some things, if we do not want to run the risk of becoming gradually discovered. It is best now to go on the attack, and bring up the British atrocities in India or the Middle East. In any case we will have changed the subject.”

Dec 13, 1942 (II.6.438-439) **

“The question of Jewish persecution in Europe is being given top news priority by the English and the Americans [...]. At bottom, however, I believe both the English and the Americans are happy that we are

cleaning up (aufräumen) the Jewish riff-raff. But the Jews will go on and on and turn the heat on the British-American press. We won't even discuss this theme publicly, but instead I give orders to start an atrocity campaign against the English on their treatment of Colonials.

The Italians are extremely lax in the treatment of Jews. They protect the Italian Jews both in Tunis and in occupied France and won't permit their being drafted for work or compelled to wear the Star of David. This shows once again that Fascism does not really dare to get down to fundamentals, but is very superficial regarding most important problems. The Jewish Question is causing us a lot of trouble. Everywhere, even among our allies, the Jews have friends to help them, which is a proof that they are still playing an important role even in the Axis camp. All the more are they to be shorn of power within Germany itself."

In place of "cleaning up," Lochner prefers "exterminating."

Dec 14, 1942 (II.6.445-446) **

"Jewish rabbis in London have held a great protest meeting. The theme was 'England, Awake.' It is just too funny for words that the Jews are now compelled, after fifteen years, to steal our slogans and to call upon the pro-Semitic world to fight us, using the same battle-cry with which we once called upon the anti-Semitic world to fight Jewry. But all this won't avail the Jews of anything. The Jewish race has prepared this war; it is the spiritual originator of the whole misfortune that has overtaken humanity. Jewry must pay for its crime just as our Führer prophesied in his speech in the Reichstag; namely, by the wiping out (Auslöschung) of the Jewish race in Europe and possibly in the entire world."

An unusually threatening phrase: It's one thing to clean out Europe via deportations; but how do you clean out "the entire world" without killing them? Perhaps a hyperbolic phrase?

Dec 15, 1942 (II.6.449) **

"The Jews in London held a day of mourning for the alleged atrocities that we were guilty of in Poland. I do not react at all to this Jewish propaganda, but prefer to sharply lay out the events in India and the Middle East through German propaganda. We will make of these questions a similar propaganda campaign as the English make of the Jewish

Question. I assume that the British will soon lose interest in continuing to speak to us in that tone about the Jewish Question."

Lochner includes only the first sentence of the above entry. And he overlooks entirely the following one, in which Goebbels is happy to hand off (not kill) several thousand Polish Jews.

Dec 17, 1942 (II.6.461)

"The Jews continue to raise a fuss about the alleged atrocities in Poland. They are now making a new proposal to the effect that Sweden will take in Polish Jews. The Americans would finance this undertaking. For us, nothing could be better; wherever the Jews appear, there too comes anti-Semitism—especially with the Polish Jews. Besides, I hear from the Foreign Office that the Swedes may actually be willing to take the Polish Jews, to some extent. That would really be the highlight of political instinct.

Eden speaks in the House of Commons on the issue of the Polish Jews. One sees in this a whole propaganda effort, a result of the strong Jewish influence on British public opinion. There is hardly an authoritative man, or authoritative paper, that is willing to oppose the propaganda-wishes of Jewry. But we have crossed so many difficult stages in the Jewish problem that we need not concern ourselves about this. Anyway, we still have so many Jews on hand that world Jewry will be careful not to act against us, such that it knows would make us angry."

Dec 18, 1942 (II.6.467) **

"The Jewish Question is receiving a big play both in the enemy and in the neutral news services. The Swedes protest hypocritically against our treatment of the Polish Jews, but are by no means willing to receive them in their country. The leading newspapers of Stockholm warn emphatically against having the ghetto Jews from Warsaw forced upon them. It would probably be a good thing if the Swedes were to admit several thousand such Jews into their country. That would give them a practical lesson on the Jewish question. In all likelihood they would understand our measures much better than appears to be the case today.

The Jews of Jerusalem have held noisy demonstrations of protest against us. They had a day of fasting. At the Wailing Wall they invoked the Old Testament Jewish curse against the Führer, Göring, Himmler, and me. Until now I haven't noticed any effect on me. One must know these Jews to be able to handle them right. They are now trying to stir

up the entire world merely to incite public opinion against the National Socialist Reich and its anti-Semitic convictions. There's only one answer to this, viz., to continue as at present, rigorously and without compromise. You're sunk if you give the slightest indication of weakness."

Dec 19, 1942 (II.6.472) **

"Eden delivered a speech in the House of Commons on the Jewish problem and answered planted questions. Rothschild, the "venerable MP," as the English press calls him, took the floor and delivered a tear-jerker bemoaning the fate of the Polish Jews. At the end of the session the Commons observed a minute of silence. All members of Parliament rose from their seats as a silent tribute to Jewry. That was quite appropriate for the British House of Commons, which is really a sort of Jewish exchange. The English, anyway, are the Jews among the Aryans. The perfumed British Foreign Minister, Eden, cuts a good figure among these characters from the synagogue. His whole education and his entire bearing can be characterized as thoroughly Jewish."

Dec 20, 1942 (II.6.479) **

"Enemy propaganda is exceedingly aggressive. The Jews, too, are talking again. Emil Ludwig Cohn, in an interview in the American press, demands the complete destruction of the German economy and the German war potential. The Jewish campaign against us is growing in volume. What won't the Jews do to discredit the Reich! They are working arrogantly and on a large scale. But they won't reach their goal after all, just as they haven't attained it in the Reich.

By the end of 1942, on the exterminationist thesis, over 1.6 million Jews died in the six death camps alone. The overall death toll, from all causes, was allegedly more than 4 million. Two-thirds of the holocaust was complete."

* * * * *

Goebbels begins the new year by recalling Hitler's 1939 prophecy—interesting how many variations on the *Vernichtung* word that he uses...

Jan 3, 1943 (II.7.37)

"It's amazing how shortsightedly the Jews all over the world operate. They seem to have learned nothing from the example in Germany. Apparently the hemorrhaging of them by us yielded very little fruit. They should expect this frivolous playing with fire to continue until they are

completely wiped out (gänzlich vernichtet). This also corresponds to the Führer's prophecy, when he explained at the beginning of the war that it would not end with the destruction (Vernichtung) of the Aryan race, but with the expulsion (Austreibung) of Jewry from Europe."

Jan 23, 1943 (II.7.177)

"The Führer is of the opinion that the Jewish Question in Berlin must be solved as soon as possible. As long as one still finds Jews in Berlin, we cannot speak of internal security. Also the Jews must be removed from Vienna (aus [...] heraus) as fast as possible."

Feb 8, 1943 (II.7.295)

"The enemy side has the advantage that it is held together by international Jewry. Jewry functions in the enemy nations as a driving element, and we have nothing equivalent to oppose it. From that it follows for us, that we must eliminate (eliminieren) Jewry not only in the Reich but throughout Europe. Also here the Führer adopts my standpoint, that first Berlin must come in line, and that no more Jews would be allowed in Berlin in the foreseeable future."

Here we have the one and only literal use of the term 'eliminate.' But lest any traditionalist get too excited about this, I would hasten to point out that, like so many of the other terms, this one does not entail killing. To eliminate is literally to 'kick someone out of doors'—from the Latin *ex-limen* ('out of threshold'). Again, this is exactly what they were doing with the Jews.

From a military standpoint, the war in the East was now turning against Germany. From mid-December 1942, when they repelled the attack on Stalingrad, to mid-February 1943, the Russians began to recapture an extensive amount of territory. Evacuations of Jews to the East must have appeared less and less feasible, and perhaps this is why Belzec and Treblinka were virtually shut down by the end of February; in fact, the March 2 entry (below) is the last time Goebbels explicitly refers to "the East." Sobibor held out until late summer 1943, when the second wave of Russian advancement began. Rather than dumping them in ghettos, it gradually became more urgent for the Germans to put the Jews to work in labor camps—hence the shifting emphasis to Auschwitz.

The next three months offered several occasions for Goebbels to comment:

Mar 2, 1943 (II.7.449, 454) **

"We are now definitely pushing the Jews out (aus [...] hinaus) of Berlin. They were suddenly rounded up last Saturday, and are to be carted off (abgeschoben) to the East as quickly as possible. Unfortunately our better circles, especially the intellectuals, once again have failed to understand our policy about the Jews and in some cases have even taken their part. As a result our plans were tipped off prematurely, so that a lot of Jews slipped through our hands. But we will catch them yet. I certainly won't rest until the capital of the Reich, at least, has become free of Jews.

Göring realizes perfectly what is in store for all of us if we show any weakness in this war. He has no illusions about that. On the Jewish Question, especially, we have taken a position from which there is no escape. That is a good thing. Experience teaches that a movement and a people who have burned their bridges fight with much greater determination than those who are still able to retreat."

Mar 6, 1943 (II.7.487) **

"Schach gave me a long report on the situation in Berlin as affected by the last air raid. It is extremely serious, after all. The damage done to the Reich capital is very heavy, and it will take us an estimated six or eight months to repair it even halfway. Yet that's the very moment the SD thinks favorable for continuing with the evacuation of Jews (Jude-nevakuierung). Unfortunately there have been a number of regrettable scenes at a Jewish home for the aged, where a large number of people gathered and in part even took sides with the Jews. I ordered the SD not to continue Jewish evacuation at so critical a moment. We want to save that up for a couple of weeks. We can then go after it all the more thoroughly."

Mar 9, 1943 (II.7.515) **

"With regard to the Jewish Question, [Hitler] approved of my measures and specifically ordered me to make Berlin entirely free of Jews. I shall see to it that there is no concubinage between Berlin Jews and foreign workers."

March 11, 1943 (II.7.528) **

"The evacuation (Evakuierung) of Jews from Berlin has led to a number of untoward happenings. Unfortunately, a number of Jews and Jew-

esses from privileged marriages were also arrested, thereby causing fear and confusion. The scheduled arrest of all Jews on one day has proven a flash in the pan because of the shortsighted behavior of industrialists who warned the Jews in time. We therefore failed to lay our hands on about 4,000. They are now wandering about Berlin without homes, are not registered with the police and are naturally quite a public danger. I ordered the police, Wehrmacht, and the Party to do everything possible to round up these Jews as quickly as practicable.

The arrest of Jews and Jewesses living in privileged wedlock caused a terrific commotion, especially in artistic circles, since these privileged marriages are still prevalent among actors. But I can't be squeamish about them. If a German still finds it possible to live with a Jewess as his legal wife, that's a point against him, and it's out of place to be too sentimental about this question in wartime."

Mar 15, 1943 (II.7.556) **

"You just can't trust the Jews across the street. I therefore told the Führer emphatically once more that I deemed it essential to force the Jews out (herauszubringen) of the entire Reich as fast as possible. He approved, and ordered me not to cease or pause until no Jew is left anywhere in Germany."

Mar 20, 1943 (II.7.595) **

"The Führer is happy over my report that the Jews have for the most part been evacuated (evakuieren) from Berlin. He is right in saying that the war has made possible for us the solution of a whole series of problems that could never have been solved in normal times. The Jews will certainly be the losers in this war, come what may."

Apr 11, 1943 (II.8.90)

"The English newspapers complain loudly about growing anti-Semitism in England. That is very exploitable, and will be put to good propaganda use. The Führer's prophecy, that Jewry will lose this war in the end, is realizing itself more and more. The Jews perhaps believe that they will be able to slowly wear down the authoritarian peoples through the long process of the war; they have forgotten, however, that a longer-running war will also induce a critical situation for them."

Apr 17, 1943 (II.8.115) **

"The USA has published statistics according to which there are 5,000,000 orthodox Jews in the United States. The United States can certainly be described as a Class-1 Jew state (Judenstaat erster Klasse). We are going to step up our anti-Semitic propaganda so much that the word 'Jew' will again be pronounced in the derisive manner that it deserves, just as it was in the time of our struggle for power. It must come to pass that even an enemy statesman won't dare to be seen in the company of a Jew without immediately being suspected by his own people of being a stooge of the Jews."

Apr 18, 1943 (II.8.123-126) **

"It was an exceptionally good idea that we raised the Jewish problem again on orders of the Führer. Anti-Semitism is growing rapidly even in the enemy states. Reports to that effect reach us, especially from England. If we continue to high-pressure the anti-Semitic question, the Jews, in the long run, will be much discredited. All one needs to do is be tough and determined, for the Jewish problem has now been frozen so tight that it will be difficult to thaw it out again.

I gave orders to investigate all Jews still left in Berlin. I don't want to see Jews with the Star of David running about in the capital. Either the Star must be taken from them and they be classed as privileged, or they must be evacuated (evakuieren) altogether from the capital of the Reich. I believe I shall have completed one of the greatest political achievements of my career once Berlin is free of Jews. When I consider how Berlin looked in 1926 when I came here, and how it looks now in 1943 when the Jews are being evacuated (evakuiert) completely, I get a feeling of what has been achieved in this sector."

Apr 19, 1943 (II.8.129) **

"The Jews in England are now also demanding legal protection against anti-Semitism. We know how this goes from past battles. But that also did not bring them much advantage. We understood that it was always possible to find gaps in the protection laws; and in this remainder, anti-Semitism, if it comes up from the depths of the people, cannot be broken by legal means. A law against Jew-hatred is usually the beginning of the end for the Jews."

Today, of course, we have anti-Holocaust denial laws, hate crime laws, etc. The parallels are troubling.

Apr 25, 1943 (II.8.163) **

“From a report from the occupied areas I gather that a truly grotesque situation obtains in Warsaw. The Jews tried to leave the ghetto by subterranean passages. Thereupon these underground passages were flooded. The ghetto is now under artillery fire. When such conditions prevail in an occupied city, it certainly can’t be said to be pacified. It is high time that we remove (aus [...] entfernen) the Jews just as quickly as possible from the General Government.

The Führer would like to talk to me before I go on leave, especially to discuss the next measures in the Jewish Question, of which he has very great expectations.”

A minor correction on Lochner, who uses the word ‘evacuate.’ Also, the fact that Goebbels describes as “grotesque” the incident of drowned Jews suggests some minimal level of concern. He clearly prefers evacuation to dead bodies. And one wonders what Hitler’s “great expectations” were about; on the conventional view, nothing dramatic happens to the Jews for a full year from this time—just the on-going transfers to Auschwitz, at about 15,000-20,000 per month.

May 8, 1943 (II.8.230, 236-237) **

“Much to my surprise my article “The War and the Jews” has attracted much attention, even in neutral countries. I should have thought the Jews would try to give it the silent treatment. But that is not the case. It is being quoted to an extent that is simply amazing. That showed the Jews are either so foolish as to let my arguments get out into the world, or else in every editorial office sit secret opponents of the Jews who gladly identify themselves with my anti-Semitic arguments by publishing my article.

The Führer argued that the anti-Semitism which formerly animated the Party and was advocated by it must again become the focal point of our spiritual struggle. He thinks a great deal of the anti-Semitic movement in England, although he is naturally aware that it lacks organization and therefore cannot constitute a political factor. Nevertheless, this anti-Semitism is most embarrassing to the Churchill Government. It is comparable to the anti-Semitic endeavors of certain bourgeois organizations in Germany in the old days. These, too, would never have achieved their end had not the revolutionary National Socialist movement taken up the campaign [...].

The Jewish question is being solved least satisfactorily by the Hungarians. The Hungarian state is permeated with Jews, and the Führer did not succeed during his talk with Horthy in convincing the latter of the necessity of more stringent measures. Horthy himself, of course, is badly tangled up with the Jews through his family, and will continue to resist every effort to tackle the Jewish problem aggressively. He gave a number of humanitarian counterarguments which of course don't apply at all to this situation. You just cannot talk humanitarianism when dealing with Jews. Jews must be defeated (zu Boden geworfen—lit. 'thrown to the floor'). The Führer made every effort to win Horthy over to his standpoint but succeeded only partially.

The East will forever regard Europe as an attractive jewel. The East will again and again try to break into this continent in order to dominate it. Our constant, untiring effort must therefore center upon taking the necessary measures for our security. If it be true today that the Bolshevism of the East is mainly under Jewish leadership and that the Jews are also the dominant influence in the Western plutocracies, then our anti-Semitic propaganda must begin at this point. The Jews must therefore be thrown out (aus [...] heraus) of Europe."

Goebbels's article, *Der Krieg und die Juden*, was written for the German public but received wide notice in the Allied countries.⁸ He writes of the Jews' urging the Allies to "exterminate and destroy the Axis powers," and to "destroy and exterminate our people." He recalls Hitler's prophecy of "wiping out the Jewish race" and how they will have to "answer for their countless crimes." "We are dealing with the most dangerous enemy that ever threatened the life, freedom, and dignity of humanity. There can be no mercy." The Jewish world war has become "a war for his racial existence," and, in attacking Germany, "they signed their own death warrant."

The reference to Hungary is a foreboding of the mass evacuations that would happen 12 months later.

May 10, 1943 (II.8.255) **

"The fights in the Warsaw Ghetto have largely petered out. I received a secret report on the mysterious question as to how the Jews got hold of the large supplies of arms with which they defended themselves. For the most part they bought them from our brave allies as they were fleeing homeward and in Warsaw got rid of their weapons for good money. There are soldiers for you!"

May 11, 1943 (II.8.270) **

“It is interesting to note that many of the London papers printed my article against the Jews. I can’t figure it out. Are the Jews so foolish as to believe this article would militate against us and not, on the contrary, strengthen the anti-Semitic feeling in England considerably?”

The following is the longest single entry on the Jewish Question. Here I include the abbreviated version that Lochner published, which captures the main points—though he uses “extermination” for *auszurotten*, and omits the two sentences that follow.

May 13, 1943 (II.8.287-289) **

“I have devoted exhaustive study to the Protocols of Zion. In the past the objection was always made that they were not suited to present-day propaganda. In reading them now I find that we can use them very well. The Protocols of Zion are as modern today as they were when published for the first time [...].

At noon I mentioned this to the Führer. He believed the Protocols were absolutely genuine [...]. The Jewish Question, in the Führer’s opinion, will play a decisive role in England [...]. In all the world, he said, the Jews are alike. Whether they live in a ghetto of the East or in the bankers’ palaces of the City or Wall Street, they will always pursue the same aims and without previous agreement even use the same means. One might well ask why are there any Jews in the world order? That would be exactly like asking why are there potato bugs? Nature is dominated by the law of struggle. There will always be parasites who will spur this struggle on and intensify the process of selection between the strong and the weak. The principle of struggle dominates also in human life. One must merely know the laws of this struggle to be able to face it. The intellectual does not have the natural means of resisting the Jewish peril because his instincts have been badly blunted. Because of this fact the nations with a high standard of civilization are exposed to this peril first and foremost. In nature life always takes measures against parasites; in the life of nations that is not always the case. From this fact the Jewish peril actually stems. There is therefore no other recourse left for modern nations except to root out (auszurotten) the Jew. They will use all means to defend themselves against this gradual process of destruction (Vernichtungsprozess). One of these means is war.

There is no hope of leading the Jews back into the fold of civilized humanity by exceptional punishments. They will forever remain Jews, just as we are forever members of the Aryan race.

The Jew was also the first to introduce the lie into politics as a weapon. Aboriginal man, the Führer believes, did not know the lie [...]. The higher the human being developed intellectually, the more he acquired the ability of hiding his innermost thoughts and giving expression to something different from what he really felt. The Jew as an absolutely intellectual creature was the first to learn this art. He can therefore be regarded not only as the carrier but even the inventor of the lie among human beings. Because of their thoroughly materialistic attitude, the English act very much like the Jews. In fact, they are the Aryans who have acquired most of the Jewish characteristics [...]. The nations that have been the first to see through the Jew and have been the first to fight him are going to take his place in the domination of the world."

May 19, 1943 (II.8.322) **

"The English and Americans discuss practically nothing but air warfare. Their successful raid on the German dams created a great sensation both in London and in Washington. Of course they know exactly what they have achieved by this attack. The former Berlin Reuter correspondent, Bettany, claimed that the plan for the attack stemmed from a Jew who emigrated from Berlin. I had this claim written up as a short news item for papers in the Reich, especially in the areas that suffered the disaster. This shows once again how dangerous the Jews are and how right we are in putting them behind bars (sie in sicheren Gewahrsam zu bringen—lit. 'bringing into secure custody') [...]."

May 26, 1943 (II.8.370) **

"An interesting report tells about the conference at Casablanca. According to this report, it was decided that the Anglo-Saxon powers would create a national home for the Jews in Palestine after their eventual victory. This national home is to take care of 20,000,000 Jews. These Jews are to engage chiefly in intellectual and managerial tasks; the work is to be done, as decided in Casablanca, by middle European and especially German workers. For this a large-scale resettlement would be necessary that would, to a certain extent, depopulate (entvölkern) Central Europe. It isn't hard to imagine what's going on in the brains of these plutocratic statesmen who are dependent upon the

Jews; but we also know what we must do to protect the German people against such a fate."

The 20 million figure is astonishing. No one before or since has claimed so high a figure for Jewish world population. The Israeli Bureau of Statistics currently lists only 16.7 million in 1939. In 1936 the *New York Times* (April 9) reported a figure of 16 million. Jewish agencies themselves were reporting that 2 million had been killed by early 1943, so there could not have been more than 14 million left—unless they didn't believe their own figures. Interesting proposal to capture and relocate Germans for forced labor in Israel. In any case we see a clear connection between the events of World War II and the establishment of Israel.

With the war now clearly turning against Germany, there were many issues more urgent than the deportation of Jews. As a consequence we find only three relevant entries in the final six months of 1943. This fact argues strongly against those who claim that the "extermination of the Jews" was an overriding priority until the very end. Were it not for the Hungarian situation in mid-1944 we might have heard nothing more on it at all.

Jun 25, 1943 (II.8.533)

"Even in Italy, the Jews have not been removed (beseitigt), but rather they just wait for their hour to come again. We can be very glad that we have followed a radical policy with respect to the Jewish Question. There are no Jews behind us who could overtake our inheritance."

Jul 17, 1943 (II.9.116)

"I receive an unpleasant report from the SD. They want to transfer all the Jewish mixed marriages from Cologne, where they can no longer remain, to Berlin. I oppose this by all means. It is completely out of the question. I have now luckily made Berlin half-way Jew-free, and do not want to take in Jewish families again. They are supposed to be distributed throughout the entire Reich, and I am willing to accept only a certain quota for Berlin."

Ten days after the above entry, the British conducted their first major fire-bombing campaign of the war, against Hamburg. Roughly 45,000 people died, mainly women, children, and the elderly. It was a war crime of the highest magnitude.

Oct 7, 1943 (II.10.72)

“As to the Jewish Question, [Himmler] gives a very frank and candid picture. He is of the opinion that we can solve the Jewish Question for all of Europe by the end of this year. He advocates the most radical and harshest solution, namely, that the whole of Jewry will be rooted out (auszurotten). This is surely a consistent, if brutal, solution. We must accept the responsibility to completely solve this question in our time. Later generations will surely no longer have the courage or dedication to address this problem, as we do today.”

By October 1943, the alleged Jewish death toll was 4.5-5 million. There were still a million or more deaths to come, on the orthodox view.

On October 23, the Brits firebombed Kassel—10,000 more civilian deaths.

Into 1944, Auschwitz is the only one of the six ‘death camps’ to remain in operation. It is now fully geared up to support the war effort, making use of all available slave labor. Some 20,000-30,000 Jews are allegedly gassed there each month. But it’s clear that this would have been a tremendous waste of manpower at a particularly critical point in the war. For the most part, though, there is no doubt that by this time German society had been largely cleared of Jews. Goebbels comments accordingly:

Feb 25, 1944 (II.11.348)

“As the Jews have been struck down (niederschlagen) in Germany, so they will be struck down in the entire world. That which we have put behind us in our struggle for power, the enemy nations still have before them; but the Führer emphasized that what the Jews in Germany have behind them, they still have to face in England and America.”

It’s a strange phrase to use, “what the Jews have behind them,” if in fact they are dead. Most likely the majority are still alive—in prisons, camps, or loose somewhere in the East.

Mar 4, 1944 (II.11.403)

“Only with the Jewish Question have we pursued such a radical policy. It was correct, and today we are its beneficiaries. The Jews can no longer trouble us. Nevertheless, even before addressing the Jewish Question, one must emphasize over and over again that it is insoluble (nicht zu lösen sei). One sees how it is possible, if one only wants it. But a bourgeois man naturally cannot understand that.”

If the Jewish problem was not truly solved, it can only be because the final deportation phase was not effected. But it was evidently solved well enough to no longer be a concern.

Hungary now comes into view. With things looking bad, Hungarian leaders Horthy and Kallay sought to bail out of the Axis and negotiate an independent armistice. Hitler would have none of this, and occupied the country on March 19. The Germans then installed Dome Sztojaj as prime minister. Where Horthy had resisted Jewish deportations, Sztojaj readily cooperated. At this time the country had some 760,000 Jews, of which about 230,000 were in Budapest. Ghettoization of the Jews began immediately upon occupation; deportations would commence two months later, in mid-May. Almost all the deportees went to Auschwitz: for forced labor, according to Goebbels, or to be gassed, according to traditionalism.

Mar 13, 1944 (II.11.462)

"Above all the Führer emphasized that he has no intention of letting Hungary come to the sorry state that befell us in Italy. The campaign is designed to occupy Hungarian territory with very sharp blows. [...] Hungary has 700,000 Jews; we will ensure that they do not slip through our net."

Mar 16, 1944 (II.11.490)

"Six thousand Jews are still living in Berlin, partly privileged, and partly tolerated. I'm keeping an eye on them, and will still try to deport them (abzuschieben) at the earliest opportunity."

Mar 23, 1944 (II.11.530-531)

"At the moment, the [Hungarian] Jews are not under arrest, but rather confined to the ghetto. We can therefore use it well in Budapest, because they will serve to some extent as hostages against enemy air raids. The people of Budapest were always of the opinion that, so long as there are Jews in the Hungarian capitol, they would not be attacked by enemy aircraft. They should want to."

Apr 18, 1944 (II.12.44)

"The Führer then explained to the Gauleiters the background of his campaign in Hungary, and how it was designed. He gave an amusing description of his talk with Horthy. He had to use strong-arm tactics because the old man was not comfortable with the necessary measures."

The Führer left him in no doubt, that either it would be a fight to the death or that he had to submit. The Führer had so many forces to apply to this campaign that Horthy offered no serious resistance. In particular, the Führer expected contributions from Hungary of food, oil, manganese, and people. In particular, he wants the 700,000 Jews in Hungary involved in beneficial activities for our war effort."

Apr 27, 1944 (II.12.199)

"Horthy made clear to the Führer that while Germany has many large cities, Hungary has only Budapest. He clearly argued that Budapest would be attacked by the British and the Americans. In any case, he no longer opposes us; on the contrary, he unleashes a terrible fury on the Jews, and has no objection to our using them as hostages; he even proposed that himself. Meanwhile 300,000 Hungarian Jews have been detained and imprisoned in the concentration camps. They should come, in large part, to Germany as a workforce. Himmler will take care of this; above all, they are to be used for our difficult war production programs. In any case, Hungary will no longer be out of line on the Jewish Question. He who says A, must say B, and once Hungary has begun to implement their Jewish policy they can no longer slow it down. At a certain point, Jewish policy drives itself. This is now the case in Hungary."

May 4, 1944 (II.12.232)

"Our plenipotentiary in Hungary, Veessenmayer, gives an excellent speech on the decisive Hungarian factors. [...] In particular, it's to his credit that the Hungarian potential is now in large part requisitioned for our war efforts. Also, the Jewish Question is now being handled more energetically. I insist that the measures taken against the Jews in Hungary have a factual basis. It's not enough that one only announces in the press what happens, but one must also explain it. In Budapest the Jews are starting to be gathered into ghettos. The ghettos are built in the vicinity of the armament factories, because air attacks are likely there. It is hoped thereby to avoid British-American attacks on Budapest, if at all possible."

This, unfortunately, is the last significant entry through the end of June, by which time the evacuations were nearly complete. Some 440,000 Jews were removed from the country through July 7, from all parts except Bu-

dapest city; its 230,000 Jews survived the deportations, as did about 90,000 non-Budapest Jews.

* * * * *

Though my detailed study of the diary ends here, a few later entries and events are worth mentioning. D-day (June 6) occurred in the midst of the Hungarian action. The eastern front was rapidly collapsing. On September 11 the Allies fire-bombed Darmstadt, killing 12,000. In October, Goebbels comments that some of the displaced Jews were contemplating a return (!) to Germany after the war:

Oct 24, 1944 (II.14.93)

"Jews that fell into our hands have said that our 'emigrant Semites' [Jews who have been expelled from the Reich] again stated the intention of returning to the Reich as soon as an opportunity was offered to them. I think it would suit them to prepare a reception that they would in no way expect."

In Hungary, Horthy was able to depose Sztojay in July, and was the de facto leader until October when the Germans again intervened. This time they imprisoned Horthy and installed Ferenc Szalasi. In November he ordered the Budapest Jews into a city ghetto.

Dec 3, 1944 (II.14.343)

"International Jewry announces its post-war plans particularly through the mouths of the Zionists. These plans are bursting with impudence and insults, not only against us but also the Anglo-American enemy. The Jews are feeling on top of things today. But they will surely regret their current excesses in the not-too-distant future.

In Budapest the last Jews are now locked into the ghetto. I think that Szalasi would be better advised to deliver the Jews to us. Then should Budapest be directly threatened by the enemy, the Jews would serve as a ferment of decomposition."

Dec 13, 1944 (II.14.406)

"The Stockholm Jews are vigorously at work to create incidents between Sweden and the Reich. They will not rest until Sweden is dragged into this war. The Jew is really the ferment of decomposition, and the real culprit of this war. He and his race will therefore likely have to pay the highest price for this war."

Intriguing phrase: “ferment of decomposition.” This recalls Hitler’s comments of 1 December 1941 and 27 January 1942, of seeing the Jews as a corrosive force in society. And again, if the Jew has yet “to pay the highest price,” then clearly he hasn’t paid it so far—meaning, he is still alive somewhere.

Even into 1945, Goebbels is showing no signs of surrender:

Jan 4, 1945 (II.15.62-63)

“I report to the Führer on the enormous effect that his New Year’s talk has had, both in and out of the country. He himself has already read with great satisfaction the available foreign telegrams. In any case we must stay cool in the present war situation. The Jews will make every effort to confuse us, and to sow discord with their lies; but that should not shake us. Also in the last months of 1932, the Jews left no stone unturned in order to prevent an organic solution to this internal German conflict. They will also attempt to do this now, in the present efforts to solve the world-conflict in an organic way. But there are ways and means enough to counter this.”

Jan 19, 1945 (II.15.153)

“In the parts of Poland newly occupied by the Soviets, the Jewish Question now becomes extraordinarily relevant. The Lublin Commission appears not to have created much that the Jews want. It gives an explanation from the standpoint that, after we have eradicated (ausgerottet) the larger part of Polish Jewry, now Polish anti-Semitism must be taken into account. How that should happen, the Lublin Commission has no plan for itself.”

On February 13, Britain fire-bombs Dresden; as many as 45,000 civilians perish. Ten days later, it does the same to Pforzheim, with another 17,000 fatalities. Allied barbarity knows no bounds. Perhaps it was these mass slaughters of innocents that led to the following comment:

Mar 14, 1945 (II.15.498) ***

“The Jews are reemerging. Their spokesman is the well-known and notorious Leopold Schwarzschild; he is now arguing in the American press that under no circumstances should Germany be given lenient treatment. Anyone in a position to do so should kill these Jews like rats (wie die Ratten totschiagen). In Germany, thank God, we have already

thoroughly attended to this. I hope that the world will take this as an example."

As mentioned earlier, this is the one and only instance of Goebbels explicitly calling for the death of Jews—in the 123 entries that I was able to find and report here. In the next sentence I have given a more literal translation of Goebbels's wording: "...*haben wir schon redlich besorgt*." Barry chose to write "...we have already done a fairly complete job." Either way, it's clear that many Jews have indeed 'died like rats,' but once again this is a far cry from complete annihilation.

Finally, two late entries from near the very end:

Mar 15, 1945 (II.15.509) ***

"The Jews of Palestine [...] have called a one-day strike in sympathy with the Jews of Europe. The Jews are playing a wicked and thoughtless game. No one can say with certainty which nation will be on the losing side and which on the winning at the end of the war; but there can be no doubt that the Jews will be the losers."

Apr 4, 1945 (II.15.674) ***

"The Jews have applied for a seat at the San Francisco Conference [on post-war plans]. It is characteristic that their main demand is that anti-Semitism be forbidden throughout the world. Typically, having committed the most terrible crimes against mankind, the Jews would now like mankind to be forbidden even to think about them."

Indeed, we are still forbidden to think of such things, even 65 years later.

As explained in Part 1 of this article, Goebbels's diaries, like Hitler's 'table talk' reflections, are not well known or cited, even among the so-called experts. I think we can now see why: these entries offer very little support for the orthodox view, and raise lots of troublesome issues that must be explained away—not the least of which is the fact that, if we are to believe the exterminationists, Goebbels systematically lied to himself or otherwise falsified his own private diary, for years, for the sake of some unknown future events. This is simply not credible. Nor is the possibility that he was unaware of the mass killing that was allegedly happening. By all reasonable indications, the revisionist account—the literal reading of the diary—is most likely true.

All of this might come to light if the Goebbels diaries were published in English, in full, with an honest translation. But don't hold your breath. I

contacted the people at Saur in Germany, asking about this. I received a terse one-sentence reply:⁹

“The title Goebbels Tagebücher will not be published in an English version.”

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Notes:

- ¹ Lochner misdates this entry as February 14. Also, as explained in Part 1, the citation numbers after each date refer to Part, Volume, and page number in the *Tagebücher* collection; so (II.3.320) means Part II, volume 3, page 320. The double asterisk (**) after a citation indicates that this was published in the Lochner translation (Goebbels 1948); a triple asterisk (***) refers to the Barry translation (Goebbels 1978). Entries with no asterisks are published here for the first time in English.
- ² These are my calculations based on Hilberg and other traditional sources. See my book *Debating the Holocaust: A New Look at Both Sides* (2009).
- ³ He does use it, but only once: on 8 February 1943.
- ⁴ “How Jewish Is Hollywood?” *Los Angeles Times*, 19 December 2008.
- ⁵ Here are the top five and their leading executives: Time-Warner (Jeff Bewkes, Edgar Bronfman), Disney (Robert Iger), News Corp (Rupert Murdoch, Peter Chernin), Viacom (Sumner Redstone, Leslie Moonves, Philippe Dauman),

NBC-Universal (Jeff Zucker). With the possible exception of Murdoch (who in any case is profoundly philo-Semitic), all these executives are Jewish.

⁶ The top seven: *USA Today*, *Wall Street Journal*, *New York Times*, *LA Times*, *Washington Post*, *Chicago Tribune*, *New York Daily News*. Except for *USA Today*, all are Jewish-owned, -managed, or -oriented.

⁷ Siberia, of course, being much further away than the occupied Russian territory.

⁸ The full English text is available online at:

<http://www.calvin.edu/academic/cas/gpa>. The German original can only be found in the 1944 book *Der steile Aufstieg* (*The Steep Climb*).

⁹ Email correspondence from Mr. Martin Wolter, dated 19 November 2009.

Evidence for the Presence of “Gassed” Jews in the Occupied Eastern Territories, Part 1

Thomas Kues

1. The Implications of Finding “Gassed” Jews

According to mainstream historiography, during a period from December 1941 to the fall of 1944, millions of European Jews were murdered in homicidal gas chambers in six camps in Poland – the “combined concentration and extermination camps” of Auschwitz-Birkenau and Majdanek (Lublin) and the “pure extermination camps” of Chełmno (Kulmhof), Bełżec, Sobibór and Treblinka. Revisionist historians, however, dispute this claim, considering it a theory completely lacking of documentary as well as material proof. In a number of studies, they have shown, based on documentary as well as archeological-forensic and technical evidence, that the alleged homicidal gas chambers in these camps never existed, that the alleged numbers of victims did not perish at these sites, and that there never existed a National-Socialist plan for a systematic physical extermination of the European Jews to begin with. The revisionists further propose that the Jews sent to the “extermination camps” and allegedly gassed there were in fact deloused and then sent away, the vast majority of them to the occupied eastern territories¹, so that said camps actually functioned as transit camps. This transit camp hypothesis is in perfect harmony with documented National Socialist Jewish policy as expressed in official and internal reports, documents on the Jewish transports, and even in classified communications between leading SS members.² The exterminationists on the other hand are forced to explain away terms such as *Durchgangslager* (transit camp), *Ostwanderung* (“migration to the east”), *Umsiedlung* (resettlement) and *Aussiedlung* (emigration) as verbal camouflage.

While the refutation presented by the revisionists alone is enough to make the orthodox “Holocaust” story collapse like a house of cards, the proponents and defenders of the officially sanctioned exterminationist hypothesis, while doing their best to counter the revisionist onslaught with censorship, criminal sanctions, campaigns of defamation and various other damage-control tactics, keep repeating over and over the same question: If the Jews were not gassed, where did they go?

One might argue that the revisionists have no obligation to answer this question. From a moral standpoint this argument is fully valid. As in a

court of law, the exterminationists must prove that the crime they allege really took place – the burden of proof is on the accuser. Moreover, since the revisionists have proven that the crime – *i.e.* the mass gassings – did not take place, they have no moral obligation to search for the missing, alleged victims of the putative crime. On the other hand, from a scientific viewpoint the question posed by the exterminationists is also fully valid, even if it is usually uttered as a merely rhetorical question and part of anti-revisionist propaganda.

Needless to say, the forced deportation of millions of people would leave a significant paper trail. Even if one assumes – and there is good reason for it – that the archives in the former Soviet Union and elsewhere which are not under lock and key have been purged of such “inconvenient” documents, common sense dictates that there should exist at least a number of minor direct or indirect documentary traces surviving in more or less obscure and unlikely places where the defenders of official history have neglected to look. In addition, there should exist scores of witness testimonies mentioning the presence of allegedly gassed Jews in the occupied eastern territories, and possibly even physical traces of them. Searching for the “gassed” Jews constitutes part of a new, constructive aspect to the revisionist critique, as the orthodox historiography is not only shown to be flawed, but an alternative reconstruction of events in accordance with known facts is offered (however spotty at this early point in time) – a development of revisionism which Carlo Mattogno has termed “affirmationism.”

The present article consists of a comprehensive survey of the heretofore discovered evidence for the presence of “gassed” Jews in the east, and should be regarded as a stepping stone to further future research. Some of the evidence has already been presented in Jürgen Graf and Carlo Mattogno’s study on the Treblinka camp³, as well as in a recent study on the Sobibór camp⁴ which I co-authored together with Graf and Mattogno. It should be mentioned here that many pieces of evidence were located by the Spanish revisionist Enrique Aynat and the late Belgian revisionist Jean-Marie Boisdefeu. The majority of the findings presented below, however, are published here for the first time.

2. The Deportation of Jews from Western, Central, Northern and Southern Europe According to Mainstream Historiography

In order to fully understand the significance of the evidence surveyed in the present article, it is necessary to acquaint oneself with the documented historical background, namely the deportations of Jews from the German-controlled European territories. How many Jews were deported from the different countries, and when? The sections below will clarify this context.

2.1. The Deportation of Jews from the *Altreich*, *Ostmark* and the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia

It is a fact fully recognized by mainstream historians that, between early November 1941 and late November 1942, more than 80 transports brought a relatively large number from the *Altreich* ("The Old Empire," a term referring to Germany within its 1938 borders), the *Ostmark* (Austria) and the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia directly into the occupied eastern territories. The destinations were, in order of frequency, Riga, Minsk, *Maly Trostinec* (Belarus), Kaunas (in German Kovno), *Baranoviči* (Belarus) and *Raasiku* (Estonia).⁵ None of the documented transports were sent to the Ukraine or to the occupied parts of Russia proper. Preserved railway documents in combination with a German report from July 1942, enables us to draw the conclusion that, all in all, 66,210 Jewish deportees were sent directly into the occupied eastern territories.⁶

A somewhat greater number were sent to the ghettos in the General Government (that part of occupied Poland not retaken back into Germany itself) and from there later on to the "extermination camps." A total of 65,892 Jews were deported to Auschwitz from Germany, Austria and the concentration camp at Theresienstadt during 1942-1943; 35,561 of these were "gassed without registration" (it will be argued below that they were actually transited east. A total of 10,933 Jews who had been sent from the *Altreich*, *Ostmark* and the Protectorate to the Łódź Ghetto were deported to Chełmno in the first half of 1942 (cf. Section 3.3.1., Page 244 of this volume) and "gassed" there, *i.e.* transferred east. According to Jules Schelvis, 23,500 German and Austrian Jews were sent to the "pure extermination camp" Sobibór, which, it will be argued below, was an intake facilities for deportees to be transferred farther east.⁷ At Treblinka, 18,004 Jews from Theresienstadt are said to have been "gassed."⁸ Yitzhak Arad further speaks of "tens of thousands" of German and Austrian Jews being sent to

Treblinka as well as Bełżec.⁹ This means that some 100,000 Jews from the abovementioned territories were deported to the east via transit camps.

2.2. The Jews of Central Europe

2.2.1. The Jews of Poland

The vast majority of the Jews allegedly gassed in the “extermination camps” were Polish Jews. Thus one would expect a search for the “gassed” Jews to focus mainly on this group. There are, however, good reasons for not doing so. First there is the great similarity between Polish, Baltic, Byelorussian, Russian and Ukrainian Jewry. All of these groups had until the early 20th century been subjects of the Russian Czar, and besides speaking closely related Slavic tongues (except for most of the Baltic Jews), nearly all of them spoke Yiddish. A Polish Jew would therefore have been able to go more or less unnoticed among for example Russian Jews. More important, it is a commonly recognized fact that a large number of Polish Jews either managed to escape or were evacuated east, first at the outbreak of the war in 1939, and later also in connection with the launch of Operation Barbarossa in the summer of 1941. Not all of those Jews found their way to the interior of Russia or Central Asia in; a relatively large number also remained in Belarus while smaller numbers lingered also in the Ukraine and the Baltic States. Hersh Smolar, the Jewish partisan leader operating near Minsk whose memoirs are discussed below (Section 3.3.3.), was one of the Polish Jews who had fled to Belarus in 1939 and remained there through the time of the subsequent German occupation. It is thus very difficult to use references to the presence of Polish Jews in the occupied eastern territories as a means to verify the revisionist hypothesis. For their presence to be of significance, the mentioned Jews would have to be reported as deported from Poland to the east from December 1941 onward, following the opening of the first “extermination camp” Chelmno (*Kulmhof*) in the Warthegau District.

2.2.2. The Jews of Slovakia

The total number of Jews in Slovakia as per the census of 15 December 1940 amounted to 88,951.¹⁰ A deportation agreement reached between Germany and Slovakia in 1941 stipulated that the Slovakian government would pay Germany 500 *Reichsmark* per deportee for “shelter, food, clothing, and retraining” (*Unterbringung, Verpflegung, Bekleidung und Umschulung*), a cost which Raul Hilberg naturally dismisses as “fictional expenses.”¹¹ Deportations from Slovakia began on 26 March 1942. Up until October the same year a total of 57,752 Jews were deported; 18,746 were

sent to Auschwitz while 39,006 were taken to a ghetto in Nałęczów near Lublin. From this ghetto some 9,000 of them proceeded to Majdanek, while 24,378 were sent to be gassed at Sobibór.¹² Jules Schelvis on the other hand concludes that, all in all, “around 26,000” Slovakian Jews were “gassed” at Sobibór.¹³ During 1942 some 7,000 Slovak Jews managed to escape to Hungary.¹⁴ Of the Jews who remained in Slovakia some 13,000 – 14,000 were eventually arrested. In October 1944, 7,936 of them were deported to Auschwitz, while 4,370 were sent to Sachsenhausen and Theresienstadt.

2.2.3. The Jews of Hungary

The deportation of Jews from Hungary did not begin until May 1944. Since the German-controlled areas in the east were shrinking at a rapid rate during that year, it is extremely unlikely that any of the Hungarian Jews deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau ever reached the occupied eastern territories,¹⁵ with two exceptions: 1) a transport of some thousand Hungarian women which was sent to Latvia, and of which approximately 700 were later transferred by ship from Kaunas to Stutthof on 4 August 1944;¹⁶ and 2) a transport of 500 Hungarian women, possibly from the Transylvanian town of Bistritz (*Bistrița*) that arrived in the Estonian camp Vaivara in June 1944.¹⁷ It is not impossible that the latter group consisted of a subset of the first group, as one source states the Jewesses from Bistritz arrived via Riga.¹⁸ Two further special cases of Hungarian or nominally Hungarian Jews reaching the east already in 1941 will be discussed below in Section 3.3.3.

2.3. The Jews of the Netherlands, Belgium and France

2.3.1. The Jews of the Netherlands

According to a registration carried out by the German occupation authorities on 10 January 1941, there lived 140,000 full Jews liable to deportation on the territory of the Netherlands, whereof 80,000 in the city of Amsterdam.¹⁹ From July 1941 the Dutch Jews had to have their identification papers stamped with the letter “J” for “*Jood*” (Jew), and from 29 April 1942 they were forced to wear a yellow Star of David with the inscription “*Jood*” on their outer clothing.²⁰ On July 17, 1942 transports of Dutch Jews bound for Auschwitz began departing from the collection camp of Westerbork. Raul Hilberg states that 105,000 Jews were deported from the Netherlands and presents the following breakdown according to the points of arrival:²¹

Mauthausen (1941 and 1942)	1,750
various concentration camps	350
Auschwitz complex	60,000
Sobibór	34,300
Theresienstadt	4,900
Bergen-Belsen	3,750

More precisely this gives a total of 105,050 deportees. The figure of 350 deportees to “various concentration camps” appears to be in error, since Hilberg elsewhere states that a total of 680 Dutch Jews were deported to Buchenwald in the period of February-June 1941.²² The number of Dutch deportees to Auschwitz and Sobibór are given more exactly by Jules Schelvis as 60,185 and 34,313 respectively.²³ The number of Jews deported from the Netherlands therefore would appear to be closer to 106,000, but Schelvis, whose figures are generally more exact than those of Hilberg’s, writes that a total of 102,993 Jews were deported from the Netherlands in 102 transports, “excluding the 2,000 or so who were arrested in Belgium and France.”²⁴ Hilberg gives the number of surviving deportees as 1 for Mauthausen, 19 for Sobibór, “over 1,000” for Auschwitz, and “over 4,000” for Theresienstadt and Bergen-Belsen combined;²⁵ whereas the always more exact Schelvis gives the number of Auschwitz survivors as 1,052, the number of Sobibór survivors as 18 and the number of Theresienstadt and Bergen-Belsen survivors as 4,030.²⁶ Thus of the 105,000 deportees, counting the Dutch Jews arrested outside of their country) all but 5,100 are alleged to have perished during the war. Hilberg adds that “about 2,000” Dutch Jews “were killed, committed suicide or died of privation inside the country, particularly in the transit camps Vught and Westerbork.”²⁷ Moreover, “up to 5,000 may have fled or emigrated, and the excess of deaths over births during the occupation was also a few thousand,” whereas the number of Jews remaining in the Netherlands at the end of the deportations is given as in total 20,000 – 22,000.²⁸ A Dutch government report issued on 16 October 1945 states the number of remaining Dutch Jews to be 23,000.²⁹ Adding the above figures together we get the following summary:

Allegedly perished deportees	approx. 99,900
Returning deportees	5,100
Deaths in the Netherlands	approx. 2,000
Mortality surplus	approx. 2,000
Migration and escapes	up to 5,000
Remaining Jews in Sept. '44	20,000 – 22,000
Total:	134,000 – 136,000

Acknowledging the possibility that some of the categories might have been slightly underestimated, we thus have statistical accounts covering the fates of the 140,000 Dutch Jews. We are moreover aided by the fact that the Germans kept precise records of the transports. The mainstream historians of course assert that much of said record keeping served as a “camouflage,” and that the vast majority of the Dutch deportees to Auschwitz and Sobibór were gassed there on arrival without being entered into camp registries: about 33,313 of the 34,313 Sobibór deportees³⁰ and 38,231 of the 60,085 Auschwitz deportees³¹ are claimed to have met with this fate, which according to the revisionist hypothesis means that approximately 71,554 Dutch Jews were deported to the occupied eastern territories.

2.3.2. The Jews of Belgium

Hilberg writes that the Jewish population of Belgium on the eve of the German invasion “most probably” amounted to more than 65,000 people, the majority of whom did not possess Belgian citizenship but were immigrants from Eastern Europe as well as refugees from the Third Reich. At the time of the German invasion “thousands” of the Jews fled south, whereas another 8,000 were shoved by the German occupiers into France. A subsequent registration of the Jews encompassed 55,670 Jews on Belgian territory and another 516 Jews in two French *départements* attached to the Brussels military administration.³² Starting in August 1942, a total of 25,000 Jews were deported from Belgium to Auschwitz, and of those fewer than 1,500 returned after the war. According to Hilberg, “several hundred” Belgian Jews died in their country during arrest or committed suicide.³³ Approximately 25,000 Belgian Jews were sent to Auschwitz, and of these some 15,700 are alleged to have been gassed; a smaller number was also sent to Majdanek.

2.3.3. The Jews of France

At the end of 1939, some 280,000 Jews lived in France; in Paris alone there were more than 200,000.³⁴ The first French transport bound for

Auschwitz left on 27 March 1942.³⁵ By March 1943, the number of Jews deported from France had reached 49,906.³⁶ A total of 75,000 Jews were deported from France; whereof at least two-thirds were foreign-born people who did not possess French citizenship.³⁷ Hilberg lists the destinations of the deportees as follows³⁸:

Auschwitz	69,000
Maidanek	2,000
Sobibór	2,000
Kaunas	1,000

Jules Schelvis on the other hand states that four French transports carrying a total of 3,500 Jews were sent to Sobibór.³⁹ The deportation of French Jews to Lithuanian Kaunas (Kovno) – bearing the transport code “73m” – left Drancy May 15, 1944; some of the Jews in this transport continued on to the Estonian capital of Tallinn (Reval).⁴⁰ Except for this single transport, no French Jews are reported by mainstream historians as having reached the occupied eastern territories.

2.3.4. The Importance of the Transports from the Abovementioned Countries

The Jews deported from the Netherlands, Belgium and France are of key importance to the issue at hand. Not only are good statistics on the Jewish populations available; the transports from these three countries were carefully recorded, and there further exist detailed transport lists with personal data on the deportees. The documented facts leave very little or no room for “unknown” direct transports of Jews from those countries to the east similar to the 1941-42 *Altreich* transports to the Baltic States and Belarus. The only such recorded deportation, the 15 May 1944 convoy from Drancy to Kaunas and Tallinn, is easily distinguishable due to the late date (the German withdrawal from the Baltic States began only some months later). In other words: any reliable report of Dutch, Belgian or French being present in the occupied eastern territories from the spring and summer of 1942 onward (and up until May 1944 in the case of the French Jews) is to be regarded as strong evidence for the revisionist transit-camp hypothesis.

2.4. Jews of Other Nationalities

2.4.1. Italy

In Italy, the deportation of Jews did not begin until after the overthrow of Mussolini by Badoglio and the German take-over of the northern half of the country. The first transport of 1,007 Italian Jews departed for Ausch-

witz on 18 October 1943. In November and early December of the same year two transports carrying a total of some 1,000 Jews departed from northern Italy. The deportations continued in small numbers until early August 1944. In total, more than 7,500 Jews were deported from Italy.⁴¹ For the reason discussed in Section 2.2.3., it is highly unlikely that any of the Italian Jews except for the approximately 2,000 deported between October and December 1943 ever reached the occupied eastern territories.

2.4.2. Greece

In 1941 Greece was divided into three parts: one (the north, including most of Thrace) which was incorporated into Bulgaria, one (the largest, including Athens) under Italian jurisdiction and finally one (including Salonika and the East-Aegean area) under German jurisdiction. While the latter two parts were jointly administered by a puppet government in Athens, the Italians and the Germans diverged in their treatment of the Jews. In the German jurisdiction the Jews were collected in the Salonika Ghetto during 1942. In February 1943, the first transports left the ghetto for Auschwitz. A total of 45,989 Jews are reported to have been deported from Salonika up until the cessation of transports in August 1943.⁴² According to Hilberg, 45,000 of them were sent to Auschwitz, whereas the rest – “privileged and foreign Jews” – were shipped to Bergen-Belsen. Yitzhak Arad, resting his argument on a railroad document as well as two eye-witnesses, suggests that at least one of the transports from Salonika in March 1943, carrying 2,800 Jews, was sent to Treblinka.⁴³

In early 1943 there lived 13,000 Jews in the Italian jurisdiction. Following the downfall of Mussolini on 8 September 1943, this part of Greece was taken by German forces together with the former Italian-occupied territories of Albania, Montenegro and the Dodecanese islands. All in all approximately 16,000 Jews lived in these areas. Up until July 1944 more than 14,000 of these Jews had been deported, primarily to Auschwitz. In all of the mentioned areas some 12,000 remained at the end of the occupation.⁴⁴

2.4.3. Bulgaria

Approximately 50,000 Jews lived in Bulgaria proper before the war (a census in 1934 gave their number as 48,565). Since Bulgaria was a weakly committed ally of Germany rather than a mere puppet state, it was able to procrastinate on a promised deportation of its Jews, and in the end, the Jews in Bulgaria proper were never deported.⁴⁵ However, in the northern parts of Greece (Thrace) annexed by Bulgaria in 1941 together with Macedonia, there lived some 14,000 Jews, according to an agreement signed by

the SS and representatives of the Bulgarian government on 2 February 1943. Of these some 5,500 Jews lived in the former Greek areas, and in March of that same year 4,215 of them were sent by ship to Vienna and from there by train to Treblinka.⁴⁶ A further transport with 2,382 Jews was sent from Skopje (Macedonia) to Sobibór in March 1943.⁴⁷ All in all 11,343 of the Jews in the annexed territories (7,122 from Macedonia and 4,221 from Thrace) had been deported by 5 April 1943 according to a German document.⁴⁸

2.4.4. Croatia

Similar to Greece, the administrative territory of Croatia was split into a German and an Italian zone, with ensuing negotiation troubles concerning the deportation of the Jews. During the war Slovenia was split up among Italy, Germany, Hungary and Croatia, while Bosnia and Herzegovina in its entirety was ceded to Croatia. In the whole of the new Croatia there lived some 35,000 Jews.⁴⁹ 19,800 are reported to have died in Croatian camps, primarily Jasenovac, during the following years.⁵⁰ During the summer of 1942, 4,972 Jews were sent to Auschwitz via Maribor. A further 2,000 Croatian Jews were deported to Auschwitz in May 1943.⁵¹ Yet other Croatian Jews escaped to neighboring countries and were eventually deported from there, which makes the orthodox victim estimate somewhat approximate. It is generally estimated that some 8,000 Croatian Jews⁵² were “gassed” at Auschwitz.

2.4.5. Serbia

According to Raul Hilberg, barely 16,000 Jews lived in Serbia at the outbreak of the war.⁵³ Due to the significant involvement of Jews in the very active Serbian partisan movement, a large number of Serbian Jews were killed in reprisal for partisan attacks. On 8 September 1941 the German plenipotentiary in Belgrade, Felix Benzler, sent a telegram to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in which he requested the deportation of the male Serbian Jews (in all some 8,000) to an island in the Danube delta (in Romania).⁵⁴ On 11 September Martin Luther replied that the Jews in question should instead be interned in labor camps.⁵⁵

The very next day Benzler sent a new request for the deportation of the male Serbian Jews, arguing that for security reasons such internment was unfeasible, and that if the Jews could not be sent to Romania as per his request, they would be expelled to the General Government or to Russia.⁵⁶ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs now turned to Adolf Eichmann, who declared a deportation of the male Jews to the General Government or Russia

“impossible” and advised that the Jews in question be shot.⁵⁷ Nevertheless Ribbentrop on 2 October contacted Himmler to ascertain if the male Jews could be deported somewhere.⁵⁸

In the end, however, the decision was made to shoot the male Jews of Serbia. Thus it is a fact that a large number of Serbian Jews were shot, not primarily because of their ethnicity, but because of reasons of military security, and this as a last resort. As for the remaining Serbian Jews – the women, children, and elderly – it is alleged by mainstream historians, chiefly on basis of the so-called Turner document, that these were murdered in “gas vans” near Belgrade (in fact near the Sava River) in March-May 1942.⁵⁹

However, in his summary of the negotiations on the Serbian Jews from 25 October 1941, Franz Rademacher, chief of the “*Judenreferat*” at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, noted that these Jews “would be evacuated by ship to the collection camps in the east” (*auf dem Wasserwege in die Auffanglager im Osten abgeschoben*).⁶⁰ This would suggest that the remaining Serbian Jews were in fact deported east, possibly via the Sava River and the Danube to Romania.⁶¹

2.4.6. Norway

1,800 Jews lived in Norway as of 1939.⁶² 767 of them were deported starting on 19 November 1942. Of these deportees, 532 were sent to Auschwitz, were 346 were “gassed without registration.”

2.4.7. Denmark

When the German occupation of Denmark began in April 1940, there lived approximately 6,500 Jews in the country. In early autumn 1943, 447 Danish Jews were deported to Theresienstadt, but none of them were ever sent on to Auschwitz. In a massive underground operation in October 1943, 5,919 Danish Jews were taken in boats to neutral Sweden. Thus not a single Danish Jew reached the “extermination camps.”⁶³

2.4.8. Romania

During the war years Romania under the Antonescu regime pursued a more or less independent Jewish policy of its own, which mainly consisted in deporting Romanian Jews to Transnistria, an annexed region east of the Dniestr River.⁶⁴ Since the Romanian deportations are only indirectly related to National Socialist Jewish Policy, and since much is unclear about the deportations to – and from – Transnistria, Romanian Jewry will fall outside

the scope of the present article. For an excursus related to Transnistria, see below Section 3.1.2.

2.4.9. Luxembourg

In 1935 there lived 3,144 Jews in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. During the first years of the war most of them fled the country, and by July 1941 there were only some 800 left. On 16 October 1941 a train with 334 Luxembourg Jews departed for the Łódź Ghetto. A few dozen of these Jews were later sent on to Auschwitz or the Lublin District. During 1942 the remaining Jews in Luxembourg were deported to the Theresienstadt Ghetto.⁶⁵

2.5. The Number of Jews Deported to the Occupied Eastern Territories

According to the revisionist position, the Jews sent to the occupied eastern territories can be divided into two main groups: 1) the Jews from the transports sent directly to the Baltic States and Belarus from *Altreich*, *Ostmark* and the Protectorate in 1941-42 (recognized by mainstream historiography); 2) the Jews who were allegedly “gassed without prior registration” in the six “extermination camps” between December 1941 and late 1943. For the first group we have rather reliable numbers (see above, Section 2.1.). For the second group we have reliable figures of arrivals to the Reinhardt camps (Bełżec, Sobibór, Treblinka, here also including Majdanek/Lublin) for 1942, and the Korherr Report further provides a figure for Chełmno (where no “gassings” took place in 1943). For the year of 1943 we must to a certain extent rely on estimates presented by mainstream historians. In the case of Auschwitz-Birkenau, we have to rely on a number of sources, which are more or less exact. In order to not make this article longer than necessary, I will here refer the reader to a revisionist study wherein these calculations are presented in detail.⁶⁶ In the table below the number of Jews deported to the east is broken down according to routes and nationality (Polish and non-Polish Jews). One should recall here that not all of the non-Polish Jews are Western Jews (even if they form the majority).

– Deported via the Aktion Reinhardt camps:	~1,429,000
– Deported via Chelmno:	~145,300
– Deported via Auschwitz:	~354,000
– Deported directly w/o any stop-over in a camp	~ 66,200
Total:	~1,994,500
– of which Polish Jews:	~1,571,500
– of which non-Polish Jews:	~423,000

The total of 1,994,500 deportees must in turn be reduced for several reasons. To begin with, a certain smaller percentage of the deportees must have perished en route during the long travel, which often took place under less than humane conditions. Further a total of some thousands of deportees were picked out from the transports to work inside the transit camps, and a number of those inevitably perished there due to various causes. Secondly, it is likely that the Germans in the transit camps subjected Jewish deportees who were dying, carriers of epidemic diseases or mentally ill to “euthanasia” (possibly by lethal injections, possibly by shooting) rather than sent them along to camps and ghettos in the east, where such individuals would pose a liability to the German administration, not to say a health risk. The third reason is that the certainty of the figures presented by the mainstream historians for the year 1943 is questionable, the figures being likely to be slight overestimates. The fourth reason is that some thousands of deportees to Sobibór were transferred to various labor camps in the Lublin district⁶⁷; it is also likely that a smaller number of Jews sent to Treblinka were transferred to the nearby labor camp of the same name (Treblinka I) or to other labor camps in the area.⁶⁸ The fifth and final reason is that some transports sent to the transit camps in late 1943 did not continue on from there to the eastern territories. The last six or eight transports to Sobibór in September 1943 arrived there from Minsk in Belarus, reportedly carrying a total of 13,700 people (documentation is lacking).⁶⁹ These Jews were likely sent west to be employed as workers either in Sobibór itself, where a plant for the dismantling of captured Soviet ammunition had recently been installed (in the so-called “Lager Nord” part of the camp), or in Trawniki and other labor camps. Taken together, this means that the number of Jews who reached the occupied eastern territories almost certainly amounted to somewhere between 1,800,000 and 1,900,000.

Operational Periods of the Transit Camps

Chełmno (Kulmhof): 8 Dec. 1941 – latter half of 1942; summer 1944⁷⁰

Auschwitz-Birkenau: Jan. or Feb. 1942⁷¹ – 1 Nov. 1944⁷²

Bełżec: 17 Mar. 1942⁷³ – early Dec. 1942⁷⁴

Sobibór: 3 May 1942⁷⁵ – 14 Oct. 1943⁷⁶

Treblinka: 23 Jul. 1942⁷⁷ – 19 Aug. 1943⁷⁸

Majdanek (Lublin): Sep.-Oct. 1942⁷⁹ – 1943(?)⁸⁰

3. A Survey of the Testimonial Evidence

The testimonial evidence can here be divided into two sub-categories, indirect sources in the form of news reports, statements from exile governments, underground publications etc. where the origin of the information is usually not made explicit, and direct information in the form of eyewitness statements. We will begin our survey with the former category.

3.1. Reports in Newspapers and Periodicals

3.1.1. *American Jewish Yearbook*

The *American Jewish Yearbook* is one of the most comprehensive contemporary sources on the development of the Jewish communities the world over. In its 1943 edition the *Yearbook* had the following to tell its readers about the developments in Poland:⁸¹

“Among the more important of these transfers of population was the expulsion of all but 11,000 of the Jews of Cracow, who were deemed ‘economically useful’ and put into a ghetto; those expelled, over 50,000 in number, were sent to Warsaw, Lublin and other cities. The stay of those sent to Lublin was short, for most of them were sent farther east, those remaining being penned in a ghetto in one of the suburbs of the city. Also sent east were most of the Jews who still remained in the western Polish provinces incorporated into the Reich.”

Three of the “extermination camps” were located within the Lublin district: Majdanek (in Lublin itself), Sobibór and Bełżec. With “western Polish provinces incorporated into the Reich” is meant the Warthegau district, from which Jews were transferred east via Chełmno. In the edition from the following year (1944, with the year in review being 1943) we read:

“There are reports of Jewish deportees from Holland and other Western countries having been sent to the occupied Soviet territories for military work, but their numbers and their fate are still shrouded in darkness.”⁸²

3.1.2. *Israelitisches Wochenblatt für die Schweiz*

The *Israelitisches Wochenblatt für die Schweiz* (Israelite Weekly for Switzerland) published many reports on the progress of the “Final solution” during the war years. In its issue from 16 October 1942 the weekly reported (pp. 10f.):

“For some time there has been a trend toward dissolution of the ghettos in Poland. That was the case with Lublin, then it was Warsaw’s turn. It is not known how far the plan has been carried out already. The former residents of the ghetto are going farther to the east into the occupied Russian territory; Jews from Germany were brought into the ghetto to partly take their place. [...] Of late, transports of Jews from Belgium and other western European countries were observed in Riga, but they moved on immediately to other destinations.”

In the issue of 27 November 1942 we read:

“On a daily basis trains depart from Berlin for the east, part of them [destined] for the ghettos, part of them for drainage work in the territories of eastern Poland and Russia. Authorities in New York are reported to have learned that a Jewish settlement rayon for all the Jews of Western Europe is to be established in the former Polish-Russian border zone and if necessary used as a political means of pressure. The deportations from Germany, Austria, Holland, Belgium and France are to cease by the end of this year. The identification papers of the deported Jews are destroyed and their names stricken out; they are henceforth only designated by numbers. It is therefore hardly possible to keep up a correspondence. [...] In Paris 4,000 Romanian Jews and Jewesses have been arrested and taken out of the city. They were allowed to bring food for two days. [...] The London-based newspaper ‘France’ carries a notice that 20,000 Jews deported from France have arrived in Bessarabia in a pitiful state. The trains went straight to Kischinev [Chisinau] and Calarisi to deliver the prisoners to the local ghettos there.”

With “the former Polish-Russian border zone” is almost certainly meant the area around the border between Poland and Russia as of 1920-1939 (note that the journal apparently uses “Russia” as synonymous with the USSR). Since, as already mentioned, the eastern part of Poland, including Pinsk and most of the Pripet Marshes, fell to the Byelorussian Soviet Republic in 1939, this implies that the “Jewish settlement rayon [district] for all the Jews of Western Europe” consisted of a part of Belarus (Minsk was located only some thirty kilometers from this border).

At the time, Kishinev was located very near the border of the Transnistrian Reservation (between the rivers of Dniestr and Southern Bug), to where Jews from Bessarabia and Bukovina were deported en masse by the Romanian authorities. As mentioned in Section 2.4.8 above, the Transnistria issue will not be discussed here in depth. However, it ought to be mentioned that, while most of not all mainstream historians today know nothing of deportations of French Jews to Transnistria, an article from 1953 by the Jewish-American scholar Joseph B. Shechtman confirms that there are indications of transports of Jews from France as well as other countries in Western Europe to that area:⁸⁶

“There are indications that in 1943 Transnistria began to serve as a kind of a ‘reservation’ for deportation not only of Rumanian Jews, but of Jews from other Nazi-dominated countries. On February 28, 1943, the London press reported that thousands of Jews who had been transported from their homes in Germany, Austria, Slovakia and the Czech Protectorate to the ‘model concentration camp’ at the fortress of Theresin [i.e. Theresienstadt] in the Protectorate, were being sent to Transnistria.”^[83] Eight months later, reports from Bucharest stated that freight trains crowded with Jews deported from France, Holland and Belgium ‘continue to reach the city of Jassy en route to Transnistria,’ where they ‘are isolated in camps together with Jews from Bessarabia and Bukovina.’^[84] Jews from Germany and Bulgaria, as well as 700 Polish Jews, were reported among the deportees in Mogilev.^[85]

A confidential report of the International Red Cross, dated January 20, 1944, states that, according to official Rumanian statistics, there were on September 1, 1943, 82,098 Jews in Transnistria. Of this number, 50,741 were deported Rumanian Jews, while the remainder were Russian Jews, native inhabitants of this area. [...] There are reliable indications that considerable numbers of Jews from Transnistria were sent to work on fortifications along the German-held eastern front. The Kraukauer Zeitung of August 13, 1942 hinted at this when it stated that the Jews deported to Transnistria ‘were housed in large ghettos until an opportunity arose for their removal further east.’”

The claim of transports from Theresienstadt to Transnistria requires some elucidation. During 1943 a total of 17,068 Jews were deported from Theresienstadt in 10 transports. Four of them took place in January and consisted of in all some 6,000 passengers. In February a single transport departed carrying 1,001 passengers. During the period March-August no transports took place; only in September were transports resumed again.⁸⁷ The first

three of the January transports were sent to Auschwitz, as was the single February transport. From the information provided by Danuta Czech in her *Kalendarium*⁸⁸ we can reconstruct the fate of these four transports as per the table below:

Transports from Theresienstadt to Auschwitz, January-February 1943				
Date	Code	Deportees	Registered	“Gassed”
Jan. 20	Cq	2000	418	1582
Jan. 23	Cr	2029	227	1802
Jan. 26	Cs	993	284	709
Feb. 1	Cu	1001	218	783
Total:		6023	1147	4876

It should be added that in the previous autumn, on 26 October 1942, a convoy (with the code “By”) had brought 1,866 Jews from Theresienstadt to Auschwitz; 247 of those were registered in the camp, while the remaining 1,619 were “gassed,” *i.e.* transferred elsewhere. The preceding five transports from Theresienstadt (departing during the brief period of 5-22 October) had all been sent to Treblinka. The transport “Ct” departing from Theresienstadt on 29 January with 1,001 deportees is listed as bound for Auschwitz by, among other sources, the *Terezin Studies* website,⁸⁹ but does not appear in Czech’s *Kalendarium*.⁹⁰ Disregarding the minor uncertainty about this single transport, the contradiction between the orthodox historical picture and the 28 February 1943 news reports is clear. If the latter were correct, then the Jews in question could only have been sent to Transnistria via Auschwitz. The issue of these possible transports to Transnistria requires further research.

3.1.3. Judisk Krönika

In a study on the Swedish response to the “Holocaust,” American-Jewish historian Steven Koblik has the following to say on the Swedish-Jewish periodical *Judisk Krönika* (*Jewish Chronicle*) issued in Stockholm:⁹¹

“One center of activity [in Sweden] was with the pro-Zionist groups. They had a journal, Judisk Krönika, founded in 1932, that publicly tried to change the official congregation policy and influence the larger Swedish community. The journal developed close contacts in Eastern Europe, especially Poland, and provided some of the best information on the extent of the Final Solution found in any Western publication. The journal also became a source of information for other non-Jewish publications.”

During the war years, this well-informed journal carried a number of news stories that clash violently with the now established historical picture of the "Holocaust." In the issue from September 1942 we read:⁹²

"Jewish school children of more than 14 years of age are being deported from the Third Reich as well, mainly to Ukraine, where they are deployed in harvest work. The children are informed about their deportation only a few hours earlier and are allowed to take along only the mere necessities."

No transports of German Jews to the Ukraine are known by mainstream historiography, which inevitably leads to the conclusion that, if the above information is correct, then the children in question reached their destination via one of the "death camps."

In its issue from the following month *Judisk Krönika* reported:⁹³

"A large number of Jews who had been interned in German concentration camps have been transported to Poland, where they are deployed to drain the swamps of Pinsk. The Dachau camp is now devoid of any Jews. Most Jews from the Rhineland, including those of Cologne, have been transferred to the ghetto of Riga."

While the city of Pinsk did indeed belong to Poland between 1920 and 1939, it fell to the Byelorussian Soviet Republic after the division of Poland. As we will see, the Pripet Marshes and the towns and cities near it, such as Pinsk and Bobruisk, will crop up again and again in our material.

In the same issue (October 1942) we read:⁹⁴

"The transport of this tremendous large amount of people [from Western Europe] to Poland was accompanied by the mass expulsion of Jews from the Warsaw Ghetto and from other locations. These people were deported farther east, and since they were more or less unfit for labor due to starvation and diseases, one can imagine what fate awaited them there."

According to the Holocaust historians, the Jews deported from the Warsaw Ghetto were killed en masse in Treblinka, not "deported farther east." Since the Polish-Jewish underground press had reported since August 1942 that Treblinka was a "death camp" where all arriving Jews were steamed or poisoned with a delayed-action gas, this news notice can only mean that the "news" of the "truth" about Treblinka had not yet reached the well-informed Swedish-Jewish journal (which seems unlikely) or that its writers did not believe the wild atrocity stories and had more trustworthy information available to them.

Finally, in the issue of May/June 1944 we read:⁹⁵

“Certain sparse information begins to seep through about the fate of those Jews who have been deported from Western Europe to Eastern Europe. According to a communication from Lithuania, thousands of Jews from Holland, Belgium, and northern France have been deported to Kaunas, where many have been shot to death in the city’s fortress. In Vilnius as well a large number of Jews from Western Europe has been executed. Some 20,000 Jews from Western Europe are still in the city’s ghetto. The Germans are executing several hundred of them every day, and the Gestapo compiles lists of the next victims. Many Jews managed to escape from the various ghettos and to join partisan groups, and to-day there is a large number [of Jews] from Western Europe who are fighting together with the Lithuanian partisans.”

While the *Judisk Krönika* had reported of mass killings in Majdanek and Auschwitz in November 1943⁹⁶ and about the “death chambers” of Treblinka (where “many thousands of Jews have been killed”) in September 1943⁹⁷ as well as in its May-June 1944 issue⁹⁸, the above quoted passage demonstrates that one still believed a large number of Western Jews, including Dutch, Belgian and French Jews, to be present in the occupied eastern territories. As for the claim that the Germans executed thousands of Western Jews in Vilna in 1944, as well as similar claims elsewhere, the question of the eventual fate of the deportees to the eastern territories will be addressed in the concluding part of this article; here it will suffice to point out that if the Soviets at the end of the war had discovered the remains of hundreds of thousands or even millions of deported Western and Polish Jews in mass graves on formerly German-occupied Soviet territory, they could easily have dispensed with the vapid claims about gas chambers and extermination camps and presented concrete forensic evidence at the Nuremberg trial.

Regarding the notion of mass shootings of Jews at Vilna in 1944, it is worth noting what historian Andrew Ezergailis has to say about similar claims concerning Latvia:

“Some memoir writers tell us that just before the move to send Jews back to Germany, there were large massacres in Latvia. This contention, however, must be deemed ‘folklore,’ because to date no archival information has surfaced that would confirm the murders. For example the Soviet Extraordinary Commission records no fresh 1944 grave sites.”⁹⁹

3.1.4. *New York Times*

On 15 June 1943, the *New York Times* reported on a communiqué issued by the Belgian government in exile, according to which most of the Bel-

gian Jews had been sent to concentration camps in Germany, Poland, and in the occupied Russian territories.

3.1.5. *Notre Voix*

In April 1944 the communist French underground newspaper *Notre Voix* told its readers:¹⁰⁰

"Thank you! A news item that will delight all Jews of France was broadcast by Radio Moscow. Which of us does not have a brother, a sister, or relatives among those deported from Paris? And who will not feel profound joy when he thinks about the fact that 8,000 Parisian Jews have been rescued from death by the glorious Red Army! One of them told Radio Moscow how he had been saved from death, and likewise 8,000 other Parisian Jews. They were all in the Ukraine when the last Soviet offensive began, and the SS bandits wanted to shoot them before they left the country. But since they knew what fate was in store for them and since they had learned that the Soviet troops were no longer far away, the deported Jews decided to escape. They were immediately welcomed by the Red Army and are presently all in the Soviet Union. The heroic Red Army has thus once again earned a claim on the gratitude of the Jewish community of France."

While it may be argued that both the French communists and Radio Moscow could be suspected of spreading propaganda, it is difficult to see how the presence of French Jews in the Ukraine could have lent itself to propaganda, especially since the Soviet Union were at the same time disseminating propaganda about German "extermination camps."

3.2. Other Indirect Sources

3.2.1. E.M. Kulischer

In 1943, the demographics professor and member of the International Labour Office at Montreal, Canada, Eugene M. Kulischer published a survey entitled "The Displacement of Population in Europe." Kulischer was assisted in his survey by no less than 24 institutions, including Jewish ones, which in turn had a dense network of information channels in the various European countries. His chapter on "The Expulsion and Deportation of Jews" contains much information of interest to revisionist researchers; here I will content myself with merely quoting the passages of interest to our subject:¹⁰¹

"This forced transfer [of the Jews] has taken the following forms: [...]. Expulsion from an area which is to be 'purged of Jews' and deportation

to a special region (e.g. the Lublin reservation), city or town, or part of such region, city or town. Since 1940 this has been the usual practice adopted in removing Jews from various German-controlled territories and deporting them to the General Government, or, latterly, to the occupied area of the Soviet Union."

The mention of transports to the "occupied area of the Soviet Union" could possibly be a reference to the deportation of German, Austrian and Czech Jews directly to the Baltic States and Belarus in 1941-42, but the following passages are more specific:¹⁰²

"Some of the Jews from Belgium were sent to a neighbouring part of Western Europe for forced labour, but generally speaking the tendency has been to remove the Jews to the east. Many Western European Jews were reported to have been sent to the mines of Silesia. The great majority were sent to the General Government and, in ever growing numbers, to the eastern area, that is, to the territories which had been under Soviet rule since September 1939 and to the other occupied areas of the Soviet Union."

Here one should recall that the number of German, Austrian and Czech Jews deported directly to the east did not increase during 1942, according to preserved documentation, but was rather a small but steady stream, and that the last known such transport departed from Vienna on 28 November 1942.¹⁰³ It therefore does not make much sense for Kulischer to speak of "growing numbers" in 1943, unless he had knowledge of other, de facto increasing, transports of Jews to the occupied eastern territories. Further on Kulischer writes:¹⁰⁴

"[...] generally speaking, deportation to the east is for the Jews the equivalent of the recruitment for work in the Reich to which the rest of the population of German-controlled Europe is subject, and their removal further and further eastwards is doubtless connected with the need for supplying the army's requirements near the front."

We note here the expression "further and further eastwards." The destination of the transports "further eastwards" is made more clear in the following paragraph which concerns the deportation of Jews from the Warsaw Ghetto – which the mainstream historians claim led said Jews to their deaths in the gas chambers of Treblinka:¹⁰⁵

"Since the summer of 1942 the ghettos and labour camps in the German-occupied Eastern Territories have become the destination of deportees both from Poland and from western and central Europe; in particular, a new large-scale transfer from the Warsaw Ghetto has been

reported. Many of the deportees have been sent to the labour camps on the Russian front; others to work in the marshes of Pinsk, or to the ghettos of the Baltic countries, Byelorussia and Ukraine. It is hardly possible to distinguish how far the changes in the Jewish population of the General Government are due to deportation and how far they are attributable to 'ordinary' mortality and extermination. Moreover, the number of Jews remaining in the General Government is in any case uncertain."

Kulischer further speaks of "hundreds of thousands of Polish Jews deported eastward from the General Government."¹⁰⁶

3.2.2. A. Rei and H. Laretei

August Rei and Heinrich Laretei, who had served as Estonia's ambassadors to Moscow and Stockholm, respectively, before the Soviet occupation of that country in 1940, reported to the Swedish detective superintendent Otto Danielsson on 8 November 1944 the following:¹⁰⁷

"Jews had been deported from Czechoslovakia and Poland [to Estonia] under the pretence that they would work in Estonian factories, but were then shot. Estonian patriots had carried out investigations and discovered evidence."

While it is documented and acknowledged by the Holocaust historians that a transport from Theresienstadt carrying 1,000 Jews bound for Estonian Raasiku departed on 1 September 1942, mainstream historiography is unaware of any transports of Polish Jews to Estonia.

3.2.3. A. Jablonski

On 26 August 1943, the Swedish Communist organ *Ny Dag* published an article written by a Latvian Communist, A. Jablonski, entitled "The Germans in Latvia," in which we read:¹⁰⁸

"During the winter 1941-1942 the Germans deported to Riga Jews from Austria, Czechoslovakia, France, and other occupied countries and executed them together with Jews from Riga in the pine forest at Čuibe, between the stations of Rumbula and Salaspils."

3.3. The Witnesses

3.3.1. Herman Kruk

Herman Kruk was born in the Polish town of Plock in 1897. In 1920 he joined the Jewish Labor Bund. Following the German attack on Warsaw in 1939 he fled to Vilna, where he remained in 1941 when the Germans over-

took Lithuania. In the Vilna Ghetto, Kruk became the head librarian and a prominent member of the ghetto community. From 1941 to 1944, he kept a voluminous diary which he regarded as a chronicle of the destruction of the Vilna Jews. In September 1943, Kruk was transferred from Vilna to the labor camp Lagedi in Estonia, where he was reportedly shot on 18 September 1944. His diary was preserved by a friend who after the war found his way to Israel. In 1961 the diary was published in the original Yiddish by the Jewish organization YIVO under the title *Hurbn Vilne (The Destruction of Vilna)*; other editions of the same book go under the title *Togbuch fun Vilner Geto (Diary from the Vilna Ghetto)*. The diary finally appeared in English translation in 2002. It contains numerous entries which are of utmost interest, as they blatantly contradict the orthodox historiography on the “extermination camps” and offer strong support to the revisionist hypothesis.

In Kruk’s diary entry from 30 January 1942 we read:¹⁰⁹

“A train with Jews passed by here today. The Jews said that they are being taken to work from Sosnowiec and the surrounding area. The train left in the direction of the Eastern Front.”

Sosnowiec is a city in Upper Silesia, not far from Katowice, which is in turn located not far from Oświęcim, that is, Auschwitz. According to orthodox historiography, the very first transport of Jews sent to Auschwitz to be gassed reportedly originated from Upper Silesia. The Holocaust historians are not unanimous when it comes to the date of this transport. Danuta Czech in her *Kalendarium* states that the convoy arrived from the Upper Silesian town of Beuthen on 15 February.¹¹⁰ The sources she gives are not contemporary documents but statements from the SS men Rudolf Höss and Pery Broad that in no way support the alleged date or origin of the transport.¹¹¹ Jean-Claude Pressac on the other hand dates the beginning of large-scale gassings at Auschwitz (in *Krematorium I*) to January 1942¹¹², as does Ber Mark, who identifies the first alleged victims as coming from an unspecified location in Upper Silesia.¹¹³ Given the date and reported origin of the transport witnessed by Kruk it nevertheless seems plausible that we are here dealing with an observation of the first Polish Jews sent to be “gassed” at Auschwitz. Holocaust historiography knows of no transports from Sosnowiec to Auschwitz (or any other “extermination camp”) taking place earlier than May 1942,¹¹⁴ but we should recall here that when it comes to many if not most deportations of Jews from Poland, contemporary documents are lacking and dates and numbers often derive from testimonies.

In a brief chronicle of the Kovno Ghetto written as a diary entry on 16 February 1942 and detailing events transpired in that ghetto from late June 1941 to February 1942, Kruk writes:¹¹⁵

“The only disturbing thing was that masses of Jews were driven into Kovno from the Czech area, from Łódź, Upper Silesia, Belgium, and Germany. The Slobodka [Vilijampole] Judenrat [in Kovno] calculated that they would settle those Jews in the ghetto, but it turned out that the Jews were brought to Kovno for destruction.”

Only two transports from the west to Kovno (Kaunas) are known by mainstream historiography for the period in question: one carrying an unknown number of German Jews from Berlin on 17 November 1941, and one with 995 Jews from Vienna departing on 23 November 1941. The mention of Jews from Łódź and Upper Silesia are of particular interest. As already mentioned, the first Jews sent to be “gassed” at Auschwitz are reported to have been Jews from Upper Silesia, and as seen above, Kruk on 30 January 1942 witnessed a convoy of Jews from that part of Poland passing through Vilna on their way to the eastern front. From January 1941 onward, Jews from Łódź are alleged to have been gassed at the Chełmno camp.

Kruk’s mention of Belgian Jews is difficult to explain, since the first deportations from that country reportedly took place in August 1942. Some 8,000 Belgian Jews were expelled to France, but deportations from there did not start until March 1942 (cf. Sections 2.3.2. and 2.3.3.). Kulischer on the other hand states that “some Jews, mainly of Polish origin, were transferred from Antwerp to Lodz for work in textile factories” during the winter of 1941-42.¹¹⁶ Provided that this information is correct, then some of these Jews may hypothetically have reached Kovno via Chełmno. Perhaps more likely Kruk’s unnamed informant(s) was in error here. Another spurious piece of second-hand information (considering the date) was noted down by Kruk on 12 March 1942: the *Judenälteste* of the Kovno Ghetto had sent him “a yellow patch from a Western European Jew” together with a letter claiming that it derived from one of “a large group of Jews from Belgium and Holland” which had recently been brought to Kovno to be shot, but of whom “many managed to hide.”¹¹⁷

On 12 March 1942, Kruk penned the following entry in his diary:¹¹⁸

“A rumor has suddenly spread through the ghetto that 2,000 German Jews were brought to Subocz Street [in Vilna].”

Two days later, on 14 March 1942, he returned to this subject:¹¹⁹

“We have already noted that 2,000 German Jews are in the Municipal Houses on Subocz. Now I know that the group of Jews is from Austria,

most from Vienna. So far, we have not been able to make contact with them."

Mainstream historians know of no such transport of Austrian Jews to Vilna. These deportees may have been sent there directly from Vienna, but it is also possible that they reached Vilna via the Łódź ghetto. From 16 October 1941 to 4 November of the same year, a total of 5,002 Jews were deported from *Ostmark* (Austria) to the Łódź Ghetto. According to a Gestapo report dating from 9 June 1942, 10,993 of the 19,848 Jews deported to Łódź from *Altreich*, *Ostmark* and the Protectorate had been evacuated (*i.e.* sent east via Chełmno) up until that date.¹²⁰

When dealing with the possibility of transports to the east via the "pure extermination camp" of Chełmno, Kruk's diary entry from 4 July 1942 under the heading "A Message from Łódź" is of utmost interest:¹²¹

"Just received a message from Łódź. For us, Łódź is one of those cities from which you can obtain almost no information. Of course, the rumors from there are crazy and wild, and according to them, it is already certain that there are no Jews in Łódź.

Now I learn from two young people who were taken out of the Łódź Ghetto in March that Łódź has a ghetto. There is no shooting, and mass executions are unknown. The only thing is, people are taken off to work. They figure that about 10,000 Jews have recently been sent out of Łódź. Now the young people know what it is to be sent out to work. They are dragged around from place to place; they don't know where they are or what they are doing. From time to time, groups are pulled out and disappear, and they assume that they are shot. [...]

Both of the young men escaped from such a group, and after a week of wandering, they were arrested in Vilna [and taken to] Łukiszki [a prison in Vilna] and were released from there only two days ago. Here in the ghetto they were clothed, and soon they will be sent to forest work."

Orthodox historiography has it that, from January 1942 onward, numerous Jews from the Łódź (Litzmannstadt) Ghetto were sent, not to work, but to be killed in the Chełmno "extermination camp." According to the "Chronicle of the Łódź Ghetto," 10,003 Łódź Jews were sent to their deaths in January and 7,025 in February.¹²² In contemporary German documents the Jews evacuated from the ghetto are referred to as "resettled" (*ausgesiedelt*), and the diary entry of Kruk clearly shows that this resettlement was real and not a camouflage for mass killings. This diary entry thus constitutes a strong confirmation of the transit camp hypothesis. It is possible that the two Łódź Jews which Kruk received the information from only had

knowledge of the number of Jews deported in January, considering the striking match between the figures (“about 10,000” and 10,003). The fact that the two young men had wandered for only a week from their work place to reach Vilna indicates that at least part of the Łódź Jews were sent to Lithuania or possibly to neighboring Belarus.¹²³

The notion expressed by Kruk in his entry from 16 February 1942 that Jews from Łódź among other places were brought to Kovno merely to be shot there seems somewhat spurious in light of what the prominent Kovno Jew Avraham Tory entered into in his diary on 14 July 1942. Here we read that “four Jews from Łódź” had been brought to the Kovno Ghetto Hospital for surgery after having “spent a long time in a labor camp.”¹²⁴ We will also note here briefly that a number of witnesses report the presence of Polish Jews in the Baltic States. Most of them, unfortunately, do not specify where in Poland these Jews came from or when they had arrived to the occupied eastern territories. Jeanette Wolf, a German Jewess deported to Riga, writes in her memoirs of Polish Jews being interned in the Strashhof camp near Riga.¹²⁵ The German Jew Josef Katz repeatedly mentions the presence of Polish Jews in the Riga Ghetto and the Kaiserwald Concentration Camp (in the same city), including “Shmuel, a Jew from Łódź.”¹²⁶ In one of the undated notations made by Kruk after his deportation to Estonia, and which seems to refer to December 1943, we read that the camp elder in a camp in Narva (possibly the Vaivara subcamp Narva-Ost) was “the Galician Jew Zieler.”¹²⁷ Preserved file cards from the Estonian camp Klooga shows that at least 14 of the inmates there were Jews from Warsaw.¹²⁸ It is further reported that a smaller group of Polish Jews worked with cremating the bodies of executed political prisoners near the Estonian Tartu camp in November 1943.¹²⁹

Kruk’s entry from 16 April 1943 is of extreme interest:¹³⁰

“I learn that for the past two weeks, two trains have been halted in Vilna, each with 25 cars of objects, apparently from the Dutch Jews. [...] Today a rumor is circulating that there are about 19,000 Dutch Jews in Vievis.”

Vievis (Polish spelling Jewie) is a small town located between Kovno and Vilna with direct access to the railroad running between those two cities (cf. Ill. 1). In a Lithuanian doctoral dissertation, which is partially available in English translation online, historian Neringa Latvyte-Gustaitiene gives a description of the camps located in Vievis that is based almost exclusively on post-war testimonies:¹³¹

“As early as 1942, there were two labour camps at Vievis, one for Soviet prisoners of war and the other for Jews. Both were supervised by a German military unit, under the command of an officer named Deling. The majority of the Jews were mostly engaged in building the highway. [...] In May 1942, there were 700 Jews in the camp. The flow of people was intense: large groups were often removed to be murdered, and others arrived to replace them. Prisoners from the Vilnius and Kaunas ghettos worked there. [...] The regime at the Vievis work camp was very severe. Leaving the camp was strictly forbidden. The campsite was fenced off with barbed wire and guarded by armed personnel. The working day started at 5:30; the roll-call was at 6:00 a.m. The food was bad. [...] In mid-1943 the Vievis labour camp came under the supervision of the Vilnius City Commissar, who was noted for his cruelty. [...] The inmates continued to build the highway. Nutrition did not improve, ‘Quite often you could see Jews returning from work, holding one another so as not to fall.’ The living quarters were unhealthy and even a threat to life. People slept on four-story berths made of boards joined together. They put some straw on the boards, if they could get any. Selections at the camp continued, and groups of Jews were brought to replace others. Those who were ill were most often transferred to the Vilnius or Kaunas ghettos. From these ghettos, the camp received some aid – clothing, boots and other things. Although the internal regime had not changed substantially, confrontations between the Jews and the camp guard became more frequent. [...] In September, a big group of Jews arrived at the Vievis camp. Selections of those fit to work began immediately. Dzena selected able-bodied Jews, and those who had gold, to remain in the camp. The greater majority, including the elderly people and children, were transported to Paneriai [i.e. the alleged mass shooting site Ponary...]. A 45 kilometre narrow-gauge railway line from Vievis to Paneriai had been built, which transported Jews to the site of their death. [...] The Vievis labour camp was liquidated in December 1943. All its workers were murdered in Paneriai.”

What seems certain of the above information is that there existed a Jewish camp in Vievis from early 1942 to December 1943. That ill inmates from the Vievis camp were brought to the Vilna or Kovno ghettos – a detail which does not square well with the assertion that Jews from the same camp were shot in large numbers at Ponary – is confirmed by the Kovno Ghetto diary of Avraham Tory. In his entry from 2 July 1943 Tory writes:¹³²



Illustration 1. A map of the Vilna-Kovno area in 1941 with Vievis underlined by the author. Trains coming from the south arrived at the Landwarów (Lentvaris) junction, where they either continued to the east and Vilna/Wilno/Vilnius, or to the northwest.

“Yellin, the representative of Vievis camp, arrived here today. He comes to the Ghetto [in Kovno] once every two or three weeks to collect wooden shoes, underwear, and other supplies from our welfare department. The conditions in the Vievis labor camp are harsher than in the Ghetto. The housing conditions there endanger the health and lives of the inmates, the regime is strict, and the labor is back-breaking. The Vievis labor camp is under the supervision of the city governor of Vilna, who is a very cruel man. About four weeks ago, the camp workers feared that all the inmates would be exterminated after two Jewish youths had refused to obey the orders of the camp guards. Once in a while, patients from Vievis camp are admitted to out Ghetto hospital. The camp inmates also come here quite often to ask for help over some problem or other. We, for our part, extend them whatever assistance we can.”

In a collection of “Holocaust survivor” testimonies from 2007 we read the following account concerning “Marie,” a Jewess from the Vilna Ghetto:¹³³

“When they saw that the last days of the [Vilna] ghetto were approaching [the ghetto was liquidated on 23 September 1943] Adam [Marie’s brother] succeeded to be transferred to the camp Zezmari, working for the German engineering Organisation Todt. He was working there as a camp physician, while Marie remained in the [Vilna] ghetto. Just before

the great action her brother arrived with friendly members of the Organisation Todt and saved her. She was right now in camp Vievis. After about a month, she was transferred to Milejgany and from there to the Zezmarai camp."

This account suggests that Vievis functioned not only as a labor camp but also as a transit camp from where Jewish prisoners were relayed to other camps.

The notion that someone would have simply made up such a curious claim as that 19,000 Dutch had arrived in a small Lithuanian town appears out of the question. For what reason would someone make it up, or, for that matter, how could such a misconception arise? But where then did these Jews come from?

Transport lists show that between 2 March and 6 April 1943, six transports with altogether 7,699 Dutch Jews left Westerbork for the "extermination camp" of Sobibór.¹³⁴ Was the person behind the Vievis rumor perhaps misinformed about the number of Dutch deportees? This may be, but it is also possible that Vievis at this time held Dutch Jews deported to the East not only via Sobibór but also via Auschwitz. Between 17 July 1942 and 25 February 1943 a total of 42,533 Dutch Jews were sent to Auschwitz; 30,413 were "gassed upon arrival," *i.e.* transited elsewhere.¹³⁵ If part of these were sent to Vievis, it is possible that there indeed were 19,000 Dutch Jews present in this town on 16 April 1943.

Later on, the same day that he reported on the rumor of Dutch Jews in Vievis (16 April 1943), Kruk wrote under the heading "Once more about the Dutch Jews":¹³⁶

"Just now I succeeded in getting a Jewish sign from a Dutch Jew and a copy of the order of the Reichskommissar for the Occupied Netherlands about Jewish property (attached)."

The editor of the diary informs us that "The order is missing." This entry shows us that Kruk had good reason to believe the Vievis rumor, since he himself had in his possession items belonging to one or more Dutch Jews transported to the East. With "Jewish sign" is undoubtedly meant the yellow cloth Star of David forcibly worn by the Western Jews. In the Netherlands these emblems bore the inscription *Jood* (Dutch for Jew).

On 19 April 1943 Kruk wrote:¹³⁷

"Europe will be purged of Jews. The Jews of Warsaw are being taken to be killed in Malkinia, near Lwów or near Zamość. The Jews from Western Europe are being taken east, their wanderings go on."

In his previous entries Kruk repeatedly recounts claims that the Warsaw Jews were killed near the Polish town of Malkinia. On 5 September 1942 Kruk wrote:¹³⁸

"The Jews are taken toward Malkinia, and there, there [...] they are poisoned with gas."

On 30 September 1942 he noted that the mass killings "are supposed to have taken place somewhere near Malkinia. People are forced to leave their clothes in the trains. From there, they are driven to underground trenches, and they don't come back. How it is done is still a secret."¹³⁹ By 27 October the rumors had become more specific:¹⁴⁰

"The Jews from there [Warsaw] were taken, as has been mentioned, to Belz (near Lwów) and to a forest around Malkinia. There the Jews are put into special underground entrances, poisoned, and burned."

On 30 October Kruk again wrote of the rumors, this time giving a source, issue no. 6 of the Polish underground newspaper *Niepodległość*. Kruk summarizes:¹⁴¹

"Some were taken on trains to Treblinka near Malkinia, many were conveyed as far as Belz (in the Lwów district), where they were poisoned en masse with gas or killed with electrical current in the former soap factory there."

By 6 May 1943, finally, the rumors had grown wild indeed:¹⁴²

"Treblinka. This is the name of that place near Malkinia where Jews from Warsaw, Białystok, and Grodno are killed. Here, as I said, the trains come and everyone has to undress to go into the woods, where there is supposedly a disinfection facility. Anyone who realizes what is going on, and doesn't want to undress, is handed over to a group of Jewish police, who throw the resisters into a fire; then you have to undress and be driven in, no matter where. [...] The victims are driven into the disinfection facility. From the inside, the air is sucked out by a machine until the people die. The bodies then burst from the pressure of the air and are automatically thrown into a so-called crematorium, which burns the bodies to coal. The narrators [unnamed] say that ashes are scattered on the fields of the whole area. Clearly, the ashes from the burned people."

It is of interest to note that, while Kruk readily reported rumors spread by Polish underground publications that the Jews from Warsaw, Białystok and Grodno were killed en masse at Treblinka and Bełżec (which is here confused with another place, the town of Belz) – the latter camp being located

not far from Lwów and Zamość – he never mentions the alleged mass killing of the Łódź Jews at Chełmno (Sobibór and Auschwitz are also unknown to him). The reason for this is obvious: ever since his encounter with the two young Łódź Jews on 4 July 1942, he understood that the rumors according to which “there are no Jews in Łódź” were “crazy and wild” because he knew from first-hand sources that “mass executions are unknown” and that the tens of thousands of Jews evacuated from the Łódź were merely “taken off to work.” This shows that Kruk, while susceptible to black propaganda about the fate of the Warsaw Jews – something understandable in the light of the fact that most of his relatives lived there – did not lend credence to mere rumor in cases when he had access to reliable first-hand sources contradicting those rumors.

Kruk’s note from 19 April 1943 that “The Jews from Western Europe are being taken east, their wanderings go on” shows that he did not believe said Jews were being gassed en masse in the “extermination camps” in Poland. The reason for this is also simple: why would he believe so when he knew that the Dutch Jews were being taken to the occupied eastern territories?

On 26 April 1943 Kruk wrote more about the Western Jews under the heading “Where are the millions of Jews of Europe?,” insinuating that at least part of them had been shot in Lithuania and Belarus:¹⁴³

“We know, for example, that Poland alone contained more than 3 million Jews, and now – can you find even half a million in former Poland? However much we try, we cannot reach such a number. And the hundreds of thousands of Jews from Romania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, and the thousands of Jews from France, Belgium, Holland, and Czechoslovakia, who have gone through Lithuania in the thousands, who were shot near Minsk, at the Seventh Fort of Kovno, etc.?”

On 30 April 1943 Kruk returned to the subject of the deported Dutch Jews:¹⁴⁶

“We have already written about the packing up of 130,000 Jews from Holland and their transport to the East.”^[144] We have also mentioned that carloads filled with goods from the Dutch Jews are in the Vilna railroad station. Now an issue that clears it all up – beautiful old furniture has been brought here, to our joiners’ workshop, to be repaired. In the drawers people find Dutch documents, including documents from December 1942, which means that ostensibly, the Dutch were not taken to the East before January or February. Thus the Jews [there] did not know they were going to be exterminated. The rich Dutch Jews even

brought bridge tables with them, in case, God forbid, such things wouldn't be found among the backward Ostjuden [Eastern European Jews]. Now it is clear that they were slaughtered, just like the Oszmiana^[145] and Swiecziany Jews. In our area, dozens of railroad cars are scattered, filled with Jewish junk, remnants of the former Dutch Jewry."

This passage removes the last doubt about the origin of the transports, because the mainly Yiddish-speaking Jews in the Vilna Ghetto would certainly have been able to tell Dutch from German. The dates written on the documents discovered in the drawers also confirm that the Dutch Jews had been brought to Lithuania either in January or February 1943 via Auschwitz or in March or April via Sobibór.

One might argue here that the trains may have brought only the belongings of Dutch Jews murdered at Sobibór, and not the Jews themselves in still living condition. Such a counterargument, however, clashes with the mainstream historiography on Sobibór. Miriam Novitch writes that "Gold and jewelry were sent directly to the Führer's Chancellery in Berlin. Prisoners' clothing, from which the yellow star badges, and all signs indicating their origin, were removed, went to several German institutions."¹⁴⁷ Yitzhak Arad quotes the testimony of Jan Piwonski, a railway worker at Sobibór station:¹⁴⁸

"I saw how the goods which were of no value to the Germans were burned. The other goods were loaded on freight cars and sent to Germany. Such transports with objects and clothing departed twice a month. Valuables, gold, and money were packed in an iron box and sent to Berlin twice a week."

One would think that Piwonski would have recalled if part of the spoils for some odd reason had been sent not to Germany, but to the Baltic States! Moreover, if the railway cars really were filled with the stolen belongings of Dutch Jews murdered in Sobibór, how come there were not only possibly incriminating documents among the objects, but also Star of David patches? It should further be pointed out that this passage indicates that the transited Jews did not have all their belongings confiscated at Sobibór. Finally we note that nowhere in this or the following entries does Kruk give an explanation to how he knew that the Dutch Jews sent to Lithuania had been "slaughtered."

A further passage of interest was penned by Kruk on 23 June 1943:¹⁴⁹

"In the Minsk Ghetto, 3,000 – 4,000 Jews now live. Next to the ghetto is another ghetto. In the first ghetto are Russian Jews from Minsk, Slutsk,

Baranovitsh, etc. In the second, there are altogether 1,500 German and Czech Jews."

Kruk knew this information from two individuals who had recently been to Minsk. The assertion that 1,500 German and Czech Jews at the time lived in the second ghetto appears to contradict the statement of Minsk witness Hersh Smolar (see Section 3.3.3.) that the last remaining German Jews in the "Hamburg Ghetto" were murdered in "gas-vans" in early 1943.¹⁵⁰ On the other hand, Smolar reports that no less than 12,000 Jews (whereof about 3,200 in hiding) were still living in the Minsk ghetto as of late February 1943.¹⁵¹

3.3.2. Hilde Sherman-Zander

Hilde Sherman-Zander, a German Jewess born in 1923, was deported from Cologne to Riga on 10 December 1941. In her memoirs she recalls an incident taking place at a not further specified date in the summer of 1942:¹⁵²

"One morning on the way to work, as we crossed the railroad tracks, we found there standing a long train made up of cattle wagons. On the tracks lay small pieces of paper and cardboard, on which were written, 'Help, we are thirsting to death' and cries of 'Water! Water!'

From the air apertures, which were barred with barbed wire, we saw hands and lower arms reaching out. Suddenly the unfortunates threw out rings, watches and money in the hope of receiving a mouthful of water in return. We were hastily marched on our way.

In the evening in the ghetto we learned that the clothing from this transport had already arrived in the Ghetto. Only the clothing. Also a couple of prams with baby bottles filled with milk. There was no trace of the people. They were Dutch Jews, deported from Westerboork [correct: Westerbork].

So it continued during the whole of the summer: Every second day large amounts of clothing arrived in the ghetto: bed sheets, shoes, toilet articles. Everything was unloaded in the enormous hall and then sorted. [...] Not once did a single human soul from all the thousands and yet thousands from these transports reach our ghetto. By now we knew where they went: to the Hochwald [i.e. the Bikernieki Forest]. All of them. Without exception. All were shot and buried in mass graves."

Similar to Herman Kruk, Sherman-Zander claims that the Dutch deportees were all shot to death in forests in the vicinity of Riga, but this assertion is not based on observations of her own. As mentioned above, the deportation

of Dutch Jews to Auschwitz began on 17 July 1942, a fact which fits well with Sherman-Zander's testimony.

3.3.3. Hersh Smolar¹⁵³

Hersh Smolar was a Polish Jew born in 1905. In 1939 he fled from his native city of Bialystok to Minsk in Belarus, where after the German invasion in 1941 and the erection of the Minsk Ghetto he became a prominent figure in the local Jewish underground. From 1942 onwards, Smolar led a group of Jewish partisan fighters based in the forests and swamps near Minsk. In his memoirs, originally published in 1948, Smolar recalls the arrival of Western Jews to Minsk:¹⁵⁴

“Ever since transports of Jews from various European countries had begun arriving at the Minsk railroad station – from Germany and France, from Poland and Czechoslovakia, from Hungary and Greece – we were receiving from our people employed at the station fragmentary reports about the Jews in those countries. We heard about the various methods the Nazis were using not only to terrorize the Jews but to undermine their vigilance by deception. We knew, for example, that this was done by spreading rumors that the transports were going to work-places in the east.”

Unfortunately, while the passage quoted here is found in a chapter describing events taking place during the summer of 1942, Smolar does not make it clear when these transports began arriving or until what date they continued. We recall here that the first deportation of Jews from Greece took place in February 1943, whereas in France the deportations began already in March 1942.

The mention of Hungarian Jews might be taken to indicate that the information relayed by Smolar is unreliable, due to the reasons presented above in Section 2.2.3. There is, however, an entirely possible explanation for the presence of nominally Hungarian Jews in Belarus in 1942: In August 1941, 17,000 – 22,000 of the Jews living in the former Czechoslovak province of Carpatho-Russia, which had been incorporated into Hungary, were declared as stateless and deported by the Hungarian authorities across the Dniestr River to the Ukrainian region of Kamenetz-Podolsk.¹⁵⁵ Historian Christian Gerlach further mentions that the 2nd Hungarian Army brought some thousand of Hungarian “Work Jews” with them to Belarus in the summer of 1942, who were then also employed by *Organisation Todt*.¹⁵⁶ In his short memoirs from 1961, the Berlin Jew Karl Loewenstein, who was deported to Minsk on 14 November 1941 and transferred to

Theresienstadt on 13 May 1942 (due to distinguished service in World War I), mentions having been in contact with a Hungarian Jew in Minsk.¹⁵⁷

3.3.4. Heinz Rosenberg

The German Jew Heinz Rosenberg, born in 1921, was deported from Hamburg to Minsk on 8 November 1941 (the first direct transport to that city).¹⁵⁸ His memoirs were published in 1985. A few days after Rosenberg's arrival to Minsk, another transport with "about 1000 Jews from Düsseldorf" arrived.¹⁵⁹ This is perfect accordance with facts, since a transport bound for Minsk departed from Düsseldorf on 10 November. At the time, Rosenberg was told by SS members that "another 30 to 40 transports would follow."¹⁶⁰ This reported statement fits well with the fact that another 32 direct transports reached Minsk: 4 more in November 1941 and another 28 in the period May – November 1942 (most of them from Vienna). Rosenberg writes that in the next few weeks following the Düsseldorf transport, more trains arrived, each carrying about 1000 people, so that in all 7,500 Jews arrived in the ghetto (which seems to imply a total of 7 transports). The documents show that the transports to Minsk in November numbered 6, and that they carried a total of 5,453 people. Thus Rosenberg somewhat overestimates the number of deportees, but within a reasonable margin of error. The origins of the transports following the first two from Hamburg and Düsseldorf are given by Rosenberg as "Berlin, Vienna, Prague and Bremen/Hamburg."¹⁶¹ The documents show (in chronological order): Frankfurt am Main, Berlin, Brünn and Hamburg. Here Rosenberg is in error, but it is not as grave an error as it might appear. Brünn (present Brno) was a city in the Protectorate and it is not out of the question that Rosenberg in his recollections mistook it to have arrived from Prague. The mention of Vienna and the lacking mention of Frankfurt are perhaps more serious, and points to a somewhat faulty memory. Rosenberg is correct, however, that the last of the November transports arrived from Hamburg. It is worth noting here that Karl Loewenstein, who arrived with the fourth transport (from Berlin), recalled in 1961 that the three following transports arrived, in chronological order, from "Brünn, Bremen and Vienna."¹⁶² Later in his recollection Loewenstein explicitly mentions the presence of Vienna Jews in Minsk in the winter of 1941-42 (and that part of the German ghetto had been named after these Jews)¹⁶³, while the documents show that the first direct transport from Vienna to Minsk departed on 6 May 1942. A hypothetical explanation for this would be that the transport from Vienna to Kaunas departing on 23 November 1941 was for some reason rerouted to Minsk, or that some Jews from the Kaunas transport were sent on to

Minsk.¹⁶⁴ However, as far as the author of this article is aware, there exists no documentary evidence supporting this hypothesis.

The part of Rosenberg's memoirs that interests us here describes how the witness worked in February-March 1942 with sorting the belongings from arriving transports in the former Minsk Opera:¹⁶⁵

"A large contingent of ghetto inmates worked every day in this building with sorting the stolen goods of the 'enemies of the Reich'. We were dealing with hundreds and thousands of trunks, rucksacks and handbags from the belongings of some 23,000 Jews, who had arrived to Minsk in 23 transports, but never were admitted into the ghetto. Instead, they were shot or gassed immediately at arrival. Only from the labels on the trunks could our people know where the transports had come from."

Apparently Rosenberg "knew" about the fate of these Jewish transports only from hearsay, as he himself during this period of time neither was present at the railway station nor outside of the city near the alleged killing sites. It may be worth noting in this context K. Loewenstein's comment that the Minsk railway station and the ghetto of the German Jews were located in opposite ends of the city.¹⁶⁶

According to the documents, not a single direct transport from the west arrived in Minsk during the whole period from December 1941 to May 1942. The possible counterargument that the luggage Rosenberg sorted might have come from Jews sent from Theresienstadt to nearby Maly Trostinec does not hold water, since the first of these transports (five in all) departed on 14 July 1942. Neither does there exist, as far as the author of this article is aware, any reports of Jewish transports arriving by train to Minsk from other parts of *Ostland* or the Ukraine during the period in question. This implies that if Rosenberg is correct, then the 23 unknown transports approached Minsk indirectly from the west via Chełmno or Auschwitz. Alas, Rosenberg does not tell his readers what he and his fellow workers read on the trunk labels!

When we compare Rosenberg's statement with what contemporary documents has to tell us about Minsk during the period in question (early 1942) something rather curious crops up. On 5 January 1942, the *Stadtkommissar* of Minsk, *Gauamtsleiter* Wilhelm Janetzke sent a letter to the Minister for the Occupied Eastern Territories, Alfred Rosenberg, in which he related that he had just been informed by the SS and Police that central authorities had the intention "of bringing approximately 50,000 more Jews from Germany to Minsk in the next weeks and months."

Janetzke strongly protested the planned deportations, arguing that the city, which had been severely devastated by the war but still had 100,000 civilian inhabitants, could not receive more transports, and that there were in the city's ghettos already "about 7,000 Jews from Germany" and "roughly from 15,000 to 18,000 Russian Jews."¹⁶⁷

On 16 January, the expert on Jewish questions in Rosenberg's ministry, *Amtsgerichtsrat* Wetzel, replied in a letter addressed to *Reichskommissar* Lohse (i.e. Janetzke's superior):¹⁶⁸

"According to a communication of the Reich Security Headquarters imparted to me, it was planned to send 25,000 Jews from the Reich to Minsk, who were supposed to be accommodated in the ghetto there. Of these, 7-8,000 Jews have reached Minsk. The rest who remained behind cannot be transferred to Minsk at this time due to transportation difficulties. As soon as these difficulties are removed, however, the arrival of these Jews in Minsk must be reckoned with."

On 6 February 1942 *Generalkommissar* Kube wrote a letter to Lohse in which he supported Janetzke's protest and pointed out the impossibility of accommodating yet an additional 25,000 Jews.¹⁶⁹

As has already been mentioned, no Jewish transports are recorded as having departed for Minsk during the long period from 19 November 1941 to 6 May 1942, when the first known transport from Vienna departed. Did it really take this long to remove the referred-to transport difficulties? Or was the problem in fact solved not long after Wetzel's reply and the deportation of Jews to Minsk renewed, as Rosenberg's account hints at?

If we add together the recorded number of Jews deported directly from the Reich to Minsk in the period 6 May – 28 November 1942 (the date of the last recorded such transport) we reach the figure of 25,657 people. For one of the recorded transports during this period, however, the number of deported Jews is not known. The transport in question departed from Cologne on 22 July 1942 and had the code Da-219. Since virtually all of the other direct transports from the Reich to *Ostland* carried approximately 1,000 persons each, we are justified in assuming this average number also for Da-219. Thus some 26,657 Reich Jews were sent to Minsk during the abovementioned period in 28 transports. If we then add to these the 23,000 arrivals in February-March claimed by Rosenberg, we get the figure 49,657, that is, almost exactly the number of Jewish deportees (50,000) that the SS and Police authorities in early January 1942 had told Janetzke would arrive to Minsk "in the next weeks and months." Was the deportation schedule resumed again in February but then stretched out over the

whole of 1942 in order to make it easier for the local administration to find accommodation for the arrivals?

3.3.5. Friedrich Jeckeln

In an interrogation held in Soviet custody on 14 December 1945, the former Higher Leader of the SS and Police of *Ostland*, Friedrich Jeckeln, made the following statement concerning the Latvian “death camp” of Salaspils:¹⁷⁰

“Q: What countries were the Jews in Salaspils brought from?”

A: Jews were brought from Germany, France, Belgium, Holland, Czechoslovakia, and from other occupied countries to the Salaspils camp. To give a precise count of Jews in the Salaspils camp would be difficult. [...] The first Jewish convoys arrived in Salaspils in November 1941. Then, in the first half of 1942, convoys arrived at regular intervals. I believe that in November 1941, no more than three convoys arrived in all, but during the next seven months, from December 1941 to June 1942, eight to twelve convoys arrived each month. Overall, in eight months, no less than fifty-five and no more than eighty-seven Jewish convoys arrived at the camp. Given that each convoy carried a thousand men, that makes a total of 55,000 to 87,000 Jews exterminated in the Salaspils camp.”

It should be noted here that while Russia as late as 2004 claimed that 101,000 “Soviet citizens” had been killed at Salaspils, and whereas a Soviet encyclopedia in 1970 gave the victim number as at least 53,700,¹⁷¹ current historiography estimate a death toll of only some thousands.¹⁷² We will return to the issue of Salaspils further on in this article.

3.3.6. William W. Mishell

Mishell, born as Mishelski in 1918, was a Lithuanian Jew who during the war lived in the Kovno Ghetto. In his memoirs from 1988 he writes of one or more transports of French Jews to Kovno in the summer of 1942:¹⁷³

“Barely had the bodies of the Jews from Vienna a chance to cool when, one morning, a new transport of Jews was brought to Kovno for extermination. [...] Nobody was quite sure, but it seemed that this group was from France. [...] Several more transports came in short succession and then they stopped, for how long we did not know.”

Mainstream historiography reports only one transport of Viennese (or other Austrian) Jews to Kaunas, which took place on November 23, 1941. The ambiguity concerning the nationality of the “French” deportees as well as

the late date of Mishell's memoirs prompts us to regard this piece of witness evidence as of minor value.

3.3.7. Lebke Distel

In his book on Abba Kovner's Lithuanian-Jewish resistance group, *The Avengers*, Rich Cohen recounts the story of a companion of Kovner's named Lebke Distel who on 1 September 1943 was deported from Vilna to Estonia¹⁷⁴ and various camps near the Narva-Leningrad theatre of the eastern front, only to be reunited with Kovner and his group in 1945:¹⁷⁵

"From Wilna, Lebke had been sent from prison camp to prison camp, a death march, always one step ahead of the Red Army. In Kortla Java, he worked on the roads in the swampy country. At night he could hear shelling and rifle shots. He was then sent down the river Narva River to Suski, where he built the German railroad. The temperature dropped to twenty-five degrees below zero; prisoners carried the dead to be counted and burned. The snow was to his waist in Koromej, where he was locked up with Jews from Holland and Kovno. He then marched west to a half-remembered foundry of red flames and smoke chimneys. He worked in the metal shop. One day a door opened and in walked his brother, which Lebke had last seen in Vilna. Their mother had been sent to Auschwitz or Ponar, her good hiding place given away by a Jewish policeman. Lebke's feet were bloody in Tallinn, the snow-covered capital of Estonia, houses serene beyond the boxcar door. A boat took him to Stutthof, outside Gdansk, the blue-black port. It was summer. Lebke was shaved, put in uniform and marched to Stuttgart."

An indirect retelling of someone's experiences like the one above naturally has less evidential value than would an account coming directly from Distel himself. We know from the "acknowledgments" page of the book that Cohen met and interviewed Distel in Yaqim in Israel,¹⁷⁶ and we may thus assume that the passage above is based on statements from Distel. As will be seen below, the sequence of events described fits with documented facts about the places mentioned.

The name "Koromej" is not to be found on any map of Eastern Europe. Distel was however referring to a real place. The location of "Koromej" can be identified with certainty thanks partially to Distel's mention of other places, partially thanks to the testimony of a certain Miriam Reich, a Jewess from Kovno who on 26 October 1943 was deported to "Camp Kurame" in Estonia. She describes her brief stay in the camp as follows:¹⁷⁷



Illustration 2. The area south-west of Narva in 1944, with Kuremäe and Vaivara underlined by the author. (Source: Section of Deutsche Heereskarte Osteuropa 1:300 000, Ausgabe Nr. 2, Blatt-Nr. U60, Narwa).

“Our bunks were very primitive. No running water. No toilet facilities. An outhouse and a well were all we had. We did what we could to keep ourselves clean, but most of the time it was too cold to even want to undress and bathe. Looking for lice in the seams of our clothes was the most common evening recreational activity. Needless to say, the smell in the bunks, particularly at night, was odious. We slept on tiers of boards, one above the other, bundled up in our day clothes for warmth. Blankets were scarce. There was a wood stove in the center of the bunk that would burn dimly at night. [...] We built roads in the middle of nowhere. Ostensibly, these roads were going to provide the Germans with greater access to the Russian front. Trees had to be cleared, road beds dug, and gravel spread, all manually. The supervisors were mainly local Estonians recruited by the Germans. Some were quite decent; others were worse than the Germans. Lunch consisted of some nondescript cabbage soup with a few potatoes thrown in, and upon our return to our bunks, more of the same with a slice or two of bread.”

A close look at a map of Estonia (cf. Ill. 2) will reveal the presence of a village named Kuremäe located some 20 km south-west of the city of Narva. Some 15 km to the north-north-east of Kuremäe we find Vaivara, a concentration camp from which a large number of Jews as well as Soviet

POW:s were distributed to a network of labor camps in the north-eastern part of Estonia, including Klooga, Narva-Ost, Aseri, Kiviõli, Viivikonna, Lagedi, and, indeed, Kuremäe.¹⁷⁸ The presence of Reich and other Kovno Jews in “Camp Kurame” fits well with the mention in Lebke Distel’s story of Kovno Jews being present at “Koromej.” Unfortunately, Reich does not mention the origin of the other inmates of the camp.

The camp encyclopedia *Der Ort des Terrors* has the following to tell us about Kuremäe:¹⁷⁹

“The subcamp [Außenlager] in Kuremäe, a village in the north-east of Estonia ([...]) was established in October 1943. The first 150 prisoners were initially housed in a former communal building. They lacked everything: food, water, latrines, shoes and clothing. [...] Some inmates were deported directly from Kaunas [Kovno] to Kuremäe, others were brought in from different camps.

The forced labor consisted in the construction of a narrow gauge railway. In November 1943 the number of inmates rose to 462. Bodmann [an SS camp physician] mentioned the high percentage of inmates ‘completely unable to work’ who were, however, to be reduced.^[180] The 33 registered deaths in November were likely not due to natural causes. In December 1943 and January 1944 the number of inmates was slightly reduced, and Bodmann registered 10 and 14 deaths respectively. 437 prisoners from Soski were brought to Kuremäe in February 1944,^[181] something which raised the total number to 850.^[182] On 8 and 6 February prisoners on the work sites were killed by Soviet artillery fire.

The head of the camp was Alfred Engst,^[183] and a certain Knott was medical orderly [Sanitätsdienstgrad]. Erich Scharfetter was present in the camp from February to March 1943 as medical orderly and disinfectant. He was infamous because of numerous atrocities. [...] Scharfetter was sentenced to life imprisonment in Stade for several cases of murder. [¹⁸⁴...] In March 1944 Kuremäe was closed. After an evacuation march under terrible conditions the inmates were distributed to various camps. Several witnesses mention Goldfields as the next station.”

Since “Suski” is undoubtedly the same camp as Soski (in Viru County), Lebke Distel most likely arrived to Kuremäe in February 1944. Miriam Reich on the other hand stayed in Kuremäe only “halfway through the winter,” when she and other inmates, including her mother, were marched to the camp in Goldfields.¹⁸⁵ As for Soski, we are informed by the same encyclopedia that it was yet another subcamp of Vaivara, located in the vicin-

ity of Lake Peipus and the Narva River. The inmates there worked on constructing a narrow gauge railroad – another detail which confirms the veracity of Distel’s story – as well as with shale-oil production.¹⁸⁶

Lebke Distel’s route is moreover confirmed by an eyewitness account from a certain Wein Moyshe about “The Entrapment of the FPO Group [Abba Kovner’s resistance group] at Szpitalna Street 6” which was included among the undated notes taken by Herman Kruk in Estonia.¹⁸⁷ The only main difference is that the deportation from Vilna here takes place on 2 August 1943, not 1 September.¹⁸⁸ Moyshe mentions among the deported FPO members a Jew named “Letsid” whom the editor of the Kruk diary identifies as “Letsid Distel.” According to Moyshe’s account the train reached Vaivara via Daugavpils, Riga and Tartu. From Vaivara part of the transport continued to Kohtla (no doubt identical with the “Kortla Java” mentioned in the Distel account)¹⁸⁹ and from there on to the Vaivara sub-camp Ereda. “About September 1” the FPO members were sent to Narva and then to Soski, where they met 250 Jews “from the ghetto” (likely it is the Vilna Ghetto that is implied). At the “beginning of February 1944” the Jews from the Soski camp “marched 20 kilometers to Kuremae, where it was integrated into another Jewish camp.” In March the Jews in this camp “marched 60 kilometers toward Goldfilz [Goldfields].” Some of them were later sent on to the Klooga camp.

The Distel account is important since it indicates that the Dutch Jews deported the Baltic States were not sent there to be killed en masse, as at least some of them were still alive in early 1944.

3.3.8. Paula Frankel-Zaltzman

In a witness testimony from the Latvian Jewess and Daugavpils Ghetto inmate Paula Frankel-Zaltzman, originally published in Yiddish in 1949 and now available online in English translation, we find the following sentence buried in a description of the liquidation of the Daugavpils Ghetto on 25 October 1943:¹⁹⁰

“Just then they started to take us to Pogulanka where the earth is soaked with the blood of tens of thousands of Jewish victims from Latvia, Holland and other countries.”

The transport carrying the witness did not stop at Pogulanka but went on to Riga. Needless to say, this brief statement has little evidential value, since Frankel-Zaltzman does not state that she herself observed any Dutch Jews. Nevertheless this throw-away reference indicates that she regarded transports from the Netherlands to Latvia as something of a common fact.

Pogulanka (or Pagulanska) is the name of a forest just north-west of Daugavpils (Dvinsk, in German Dünaburg) in south-eastern Latvia, which allegedly served as the site for mass shootings of Jews.¹⁹¹

3.3.9. Jack Ratz

Jack Ratz was born in Riga in 1927. In May 1943, he was sent to Lenta, a labor camp some 40 km north-east of Riga, where some 500 Jews worked.¹⁹² We read in Ratz's book:¹⁹³

"After two months, four hundred Jews were left in Lenta, all Latvians. After a few months, a new transport arrived, but the newcomers were not Latvian. They were German, Czechoslovakian, Austrian, and Polish Jews. Some of the foreign Jews were from the Riga ghetto; the Polish Jews had come straight from Poland. Lenta now had a mixed Jewish population."

One should note here that the Polish Jews are explicitly stated to have "come straight from Poland," in other words they were not Polish Jews from Belarus.

To be continued...

Notes

- ¹ Strictly speaking, the occupied eastern territories were the two *Reichskommissariat Ostland* and Ukraine. *Reichskommissariat Ostland* consisted of the four *Generalbezirk Estland* (Estonia), *Lettland* (Latvia), *Litauen* (Lithuania) and *Weißruthenien* (White Ruthenia), i.e. the occupied western part of Belarus SSR. Two further *Reichskommissariat* were planned that would encompass Muscovite Russia and the Caucasian region respectively, but those administrative entities were never realized due to the retreat of the German armies. The great areas in west and south-west Russia taken by the German early in the war were not occupied in the same sense that the territories of the two *Reichskommissariat* were, and were administered by the military command and the SS generals. It seems highly likely, however, that Jews were transported to Russia proper to carry out labor near the front; cf. H. Kruk's diary entry about Polish Jews from Sosnowiec passing through Vilna in a train heading "in the direction of the eastern front" (Section 3.3.1., Page 245).
- ² To give just one example: In a letter sent to eight high-ranking members of the SS administration, among them the head of SS-WVHA, Oswald Pohl, on 5 July 1943, Heinrich Himmler ordered "The Sobibor transit camp [*Durchgangslager*], located in the Lublin district, ([...]) to be converted into a concentration camp" (a transformation which ultimately did not take place); Nuremberg Document NO-482.
- ³ Jürgen Graf, Carlo Mattogno, *Treblinka. Extermination Camp or Transit Camp?*, Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago 2004.

- ⁴ Jürgen Graf, Thomas Kues, Carlo Mattogno, *Sobibor: Holocaust Propaganda and Reality*, TBR Books 2010.
- ⁵ For a list of the documented transports, see Jürgen Graf, Carlo Mattogno, *Treblinka. Extermination Camp or Transit Camp?*, *op. cit.*, pp. 199-201.
- ⁶ The available railway documents show that, between 8 November 1941 and 28 November 1942, 66 transports with a total of 56,221 Jewish deportees were sent from Altreich, Vienna and the Protectorate to the East (cf. note 5). In an enclosure to “*Meldungen aus den besetzten Ostgebieten*” no. 10 from 3 July 1942 (RGVA, 500-1-775, p. 233) it is stated that 25 transports carrying 25,103 Jews had been sent to Riga between 17 November 1941 and 6 February 1942. Only 15,114 of these deportees are found in the available railway documentation. Thus the number of directly deported Jews amounted to [56,221 + (25,103–15,114)=] 66,210.
- ⁷ Jules Schelvis, *Sobibór. A History of a Nazi Death Camp*, Berg, Oxford / New York 2007, p. 224.
- ⁸ Miroslav Kárný, *Konečné řešení. Genocida českých židů v německé protektorátní politice*, Academia, Prague 1991, pp. 115f.
- ⁹ Yitzhak Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka. The Operation Reinhard Death Camps*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington / Indianapolis 1987, pp. 139-140.
- ¹⁰ Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews*, 3rd edition, Yale University Press, New Haven / London 2003, vol. II, p. 769.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 776-777. It seems somewhat odd that Germany would bother to scam this money from Slovakia, since the latter nation, as Hilberg puts it, was a “puppet state” (*ibid.*, p. 792) and thus could have been plundered by the Germans in a much less roundabout manner.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, p. 785.
- ¹³ Jules Schelvis, *Sobibór. A History of a Nazi Death Camp*, *op. cit.*, p. 215.
- ¹⁴ Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews*, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 781; on p. 785 though Hilberg gives their number as merely 6,000.
- ¹⁵ This of course also applies to the Jews from Slovakia and elsewhere deported to Auschwitz during 1944.
- ¹⁶ Jürgen Graf, Carlo Mattogno, *Concentration Camp Stutthof and its Function in National Socialist Jewish Policy*, Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago 2003, p. 24.
- ¹⁷ In June 1944 the possibility of using Hungarian Jews as workers in the Estonian camps was under consideration. A total of 2,310 men and 240 women were scheduled for deportation, but in the end it appears that only the 500 women arrived in Estonia. They were employed at the *Arbeitseinsatzstätte* Baltõl in north-eastern Estonia. Cf. Toomas Hiio et al. (eds.), *Estonia 1940-1945: Reports of the Estonian International Commission for the Investigation of Crimes against Humanity*, Tallinn 2006, p. 724.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 719.
- ¹⁹ Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews*, *op. cit.*, pp. 600-601, 610.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 615.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 628-629.
- ²² *Ibid.*, p. 614.

- ²³ Jules Schelvis, *Sobibór. A History of a Nazi Death Camp*, op. cit., p. 198.
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 199.
- ²⁵ Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews*, op. cit., p. 629.
- ²⁶ Jules Schelvis, *Sobibór. A History of a Nazi Death Camp*, op. cit., p. 199.
- ²⁷ Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews*, op. cit., p. 629.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*, note 139.
- ²⁹ PS-1726, IMT Vol. XXVII, p. 506.
- ³⁰ Schelvis writes that according to his own "rough estimates," about 1,000 Dutch Jews were transferred upon their arrival at Sobibór to labor camps in the Lublin district; J. Schelvis, *Sobibór. A History of a Nazi Death Camp*, op. cit., p. 14.
- ³¹ Danuta Czech, *Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz-Birkenau 1939-1945*, Rowohlt, Reinbek 1989, passim.
- ³² Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews*, op. cit., p. 636.
- ³³ *Ibid.*, p. 645.
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 650.
- ³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 672.
- ³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 695.
- ³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 699.
- ³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 700.
- ³⁹ J. Schelvis, *Sobibór. A History of a Nazi Death Camp*, op. cit., p. 198, 216-218.
- ⁴⁰ Serge Klarsfeld, *Le Mémorial de la Déportation des Juifs de France*, Beate and Serge Klarsfeld, Paris 1978. This book lacks page numbers. See also Alex Faitelson, *Heroism & Bravery in Lithuania 1941-1945*, Gefen, Jerusalem 1996, pp. 373-375. A number of inscriptions preserved on the walls of Cell No. 5 in the Kovno Ninth Fort were left by those French Jews. The inscriptions transcribed by Faitelson includes an "S. Kool, Jr., Amsterdam," something which indicates that this transport may have contained a miniscule number of Dutch Jews, most likely individuals that had been arrested in France. Faitelson also writes of Belgian Jews being in the Drancy transport, but provides no evidence for this claim.
- ⁴¹ Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews*, op. cit., p. 716, 718, 722-723.
- ⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 738-739, 742-743, 745.
- ⁴³ Yitzhak Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka. The Operation Reinhard Death Camps*, op. cit., p. 146.
- ⁴⁴ Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews*, op. cit., pp. 748-750, 755.
- ⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 794ff.
- ⁴⁶ Yitzhak Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka. The Operation Reinhard Death Camps*, op. cit., p. 143.
- ⁴⁷ J. Schelvis, *Sobibór. A History of a Nazi Death Camp*, Berg Publishers, Oxford / New York 2007, p. 226, note 5.
- ⁴⁸ Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews*, vol. II, op. cit., p. 805.
- ⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 757.
- ⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 761.
- ⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 764-765.
- ⁵² This group is sometimes confusingly designated as "Yugoslavian."
- ⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 725.

- ⁵⁴ R. M. Kempner, *Eichmann und Komplizen*, Europa Verlag, Zürich/Stuttgart/Vienna 1961, p. 289, 290.
- ⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 290.
- ⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 291, facsimile of the document.
- ⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 292. Nuremberg document NG-3354.
- ⁵⁸ *Ibid.*
- ⁵⁹ Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews*, vol. II, *op. cit.*, pp. 736-737.
- ⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 293.
- ⁶¹ Cf. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Danubemap.jpg>
- ⁶² Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews*, vol. II, *op. cit.*, p. 584ff.
- ⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 589-596.
- ⁶⁴ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 808-853.
- ⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 632-634.
- ⁶⁶ Jürgen Graf, Thomas Kues, Carlo Mattogno, *Die Akte Sobibor*, pp. 105-109, online: <https://codoh.com/wp-content/uploads/graf-kues-mattogno-die-akte-sobibor.pdf>
- ⁶⁷ As mentioned above, Jules Schelvis states that approximately 1,000 Dutch Jews were transferred from Sobibór to various labor camps. Witnesses quoted by Schelvis further speak of at least 40 French Jews transferred to Lublin and of 830-880 Belarus Jews transferred to Trawniki; J. Schelvis, *Sobibór. A History of a Nazi Death Camp*, *op. cit.*, p. 14, 217, 219f.
- ⁶⁸ Cf. the testimony of Treblinka I inmate Israel Cymlich, according to which “transports of workers were brought in frequently from the death camp”; Israel Cymlich & Oskar Strawczynski, *Escaping Hell in Treblinka*, Yad Vashem, New York/Jerusalem 2007, p. 36.
- ⁶⁹ J. Schelvis, *Sobibór. A History of a Nazi Death Camp*, *op. cit.*, p. 198, 218-220.
- ⁷⁰ These are the most commonly given dates; for a list of alleged dates relating to the camp cf. Ingrid Weckert, “What Was Kulmhof/Chelmno? Questions about a Controversial Extermination Camp,” *The Revisionist* 1(4) (2003), pp. 400-412. Any Jews deported to the camp in the summer of 1944 would almost certainly not have reached the eastern territories. It is in fact highly dubious that any Jews were deported to Chelmno during 1944, cf. Carlo Mattogno, *Il campo di Chelmno tra storia e propaganda*, Effepi, Genua 2009.
- ⁷¹ Cf. Section 3.3.1.
- ⁷² The last “gassing” in Auschwitz “probably” took place on 1 November 1944, according to Danuta Czech, *Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz-Birkenau 1939-1945*, *op. cit.*, p. 921.
- ⁷³ Yitzhak Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka. The Operation Reinhard Death Camps*, *op. cit.*, p. 68.
- ⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 172. The Höfle document shows that 0 Jews were deported to the camp during the last two weeks of December 1942, implying that transports ceased during the first half of December or already in November.
- ⁷⁵ J. Schelvis, *Sobibór. A History of a Nazi Death Camp*, *op. cit.*, p. 36.
- ⁷⁶ 14 October 1943 is the date of the well-known Sobibór uprising and mass escape, following which the camp was promptly liquidated. It should be pointed out that the last 6 or 8 transports (the number is not known due to lack of docu-

- mentation) arrived at Sobibór from Ostland in September 1943 and consisted of Russian Jews who were most likely either employed within Sobibór or transferred to Trawniki and other labor camps in the Lublin district. The last transport to Sobibór transited east was almost certainly a convoy from the Netherlands which departed on 20 July 1943 (cf. *ibid.*, p. 198).
- ⁷⁷ Yitzhak Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka. The Operation Reinhard Death Camps*, *op. cit.*, p. 81.
- ⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 372.
- ⁷⁹ Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews*, vol. III, *op. cit.*, p. 938.
- ⁸⁰ Based on the Höfle document we know that a total of 24,733 Jews were transited via Camp Lublin (Majdanek) during 1942, whereof 12,761 during the latter half of December. In the latest official estimate of the Majdanek death toll (from 2005), historian Tomasz Kranz does not claim any “gassings” for the year 1943. If any Jews were transited via Majdanek in 1943, their numbers are likely to have been very small. For more on the Majdanek victim figure, cf. Jürgen Graf, “Zur Revision der Opferzahl von Majdanek,” online: <http://codoh.com/media/files/uploads/livres7/JGrevismajda.pdf>
- ⁸¹ *American Jewish Yearbook*, no. 44 (1942-1943), p. 244f.
- ⁸² *American Jewish Yearbook*, no. 45 (1943-1944), p. 304.
- ⁸³ *JTA Bulletin*, March 1, 1943. (Note in original).
- ⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, November 1, 1943. (Note in original).
- ⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, July 23, 1943. (Note in original).
- ⁸⁶ Joseph B. Shechtman, “The Transnistria Reservation,” in: Koppel S. Pinson (ed.), *Studies on the Epoch of the Jewish Catastrophe, 1933-1945* (YIVO Annual of Jewish Social Science, Vol. VIII), Yiddish Scientific Institute – YIVO, New York 1953, pp. 190-191.
- ⁸⁷ Cf. Elena Makarova et al., *Theresienstadt: kultur och barbari / Theresienstadt: Culture and Barbarism*, Carlssons Bokförlag, Lund / Stockholm 1995, p. 11. http://www.jewishgen.org/databases/Holocaust/0025_BialystokChildren5Oct1943.htm
- ⁸⁸ Danuta Czech, *Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz-Birkenau 1939-1945*, *op. cit.* Entries for January and February 1943, *passim*.
- ⁸⁹ http://www.terezinstudies.cz/deu/ITI/database/tr_out_to (Accessed on 1 May 2010).
- ⁹⁰ The webpage <http://www.gedenkbuch.halle.de/gbdatensatz.php?num=294> states that a Martha Bratel was brought on Transport Ct to Auschwitz on 29 January 1943, giving as its source a transport list reproduced in *Theresienstädter Gedenkbuch – Die Opfer der Judentransporte aus Deutschland nach Theresienstadt 1942-1945* (Prague 2000), p. 709. The author of this article has not been able to verify this source.
- ⁹¹ Steven Koblik, *The Stones Cry Out: Sweden's Response to the Persecution of the Jews*, Holocaust Library, New York 1988, p. 56.
- ⁹² *Judisk Krönika*, vol. 11, no. 7, September 1942, p. 91.
- ⁹³ *Judisk Krönika*, vol. 11, no. 8, October 1942, p. 123.
- ⁹⁴ *Ibid.*
- ⁹⁵ *Judisk Krönika*, vol. 13, no. 5, May/June 1944, p. 68.
- ⁹⁶ *Judisk Krönika*, vol. 12, no. 9, November 1943, p. 150.

- ⁹⁷ *Judisk Krönika*, vol. 12, no. 7, September 1943, p. 105.
- ⁹⁸ *Judisk Krönika*, vol. 13, no. 5, May/June 1944, p. 67.
- ⁹⁹ Andrew Ezergailis, Harold Otto, Gvido Augusts, *Nazi/Soviet Disinformation about the Holocaust in Nazi-Occupied Latvia*, Latvijas 50 Gadu Okupācijas Muzeja Fonds, Riga 2005, p. 115.
- ¹⁰⁰ Reproduced in: *La presse antiraciste sous l'occupation hitlérienne*. Foreword by A. Raisky, Paris 1950, p. 179.
- ¹⁰¹ E.M. Kulischer, *The Displacement of Population in Europe*, International Labour Office, Montreal 1943, pp. 96-97.
- ¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 107.
- ¹⁰³ Cf. Jürgen Graf, Carlo Mattogno, *Treblinka. Extermination Camp or Transit Camp?*, *op. cit.*, pp. 199-201.
- ¹⁰⁴ E.M. Kulischer, *The Displacement of Population in Europe*, *op. cit.*, p. 110.
- ¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 111.
- ¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 113.
- ¹⁰⁷ Memoranda written by Otto Danielsson on 9 November 1944, attached to a letter from Thulin to SUK on 27 November 1944, Kontrollbyråns korrespondens E4:1, SUK, RA; quoted in Mats Deland, *Purgatorium. Sverige och andra världskrigets krigsförbrytare*, Atlas, Stockholm 2010, p. 323, 521 (note 1106).
- ¹⁰⁸ Quoted in Andrew Ezergailis (ed.), Stockholm Documents. *The German Occupation of Latvia 1941-1945. What Did America Know?*, Historical Institute of Latvia, Riga 2002, p. 472.
- ¹⁰⁹ Herman Kruk, *The Last Days of the Jerusalem of Lithuania. Chronicles from the Vilna Ghetto and the Camps, 1939-1944*, Yale University Press, New Haven/London 2002, p. 187.
- ¹¹⁰ Danuta Czech, *Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz-Birkenau 1939-1945*, *op. cit.*, pp. 174f.
- ¹¹¹ Cf. Carlo Mattogno, *Auschwitz: Crematorium I and the Alleged Homicidal Gassings*, Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago 2005, pp. 67-68.
- ¹¹² J.-C. Pressac, *Les crématoires d'Auschwitz. La machinerie du meurtre de masse*, CNRS Editions, Paris 1993, p. 38.
- ¹¹³ Ber Mark, *The Scrolls of Auschwitz*, Am Oved Publishers, Tel Aviv 1985, p. 4.
- ¹¹⁴ Shmuel Spector, Geoffrey Wigoder, *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust*, Vol. 3, New York University Press, New York 2001, p. 1221.
- ¹¹⁵ Herman Kruk, *The Last Days of the Jerusalem of Lithuania*, *op. cit.*, p. 210.
- ¹¹⁶ E.M. Kulischer, *The Displacement of Population in Europe*, *op. cit.*, p. 104.
- ¹¹⁷ Herman Kruk, *The Last Days of the Jerusalem of Lithuania*, *op. cit.*, p. 231.
- ¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 230.
- ¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 236.
- ¹²⁰ Jüdisches Historisches Institut Warschau (ed.), *Faschismus-Getto-Massenmord. Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges*, Röderberg-Verlag, Frankfurt am Main, pp. 285-286.
- ¹²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 319.
- ¹²² Danuta Dąbrowska, Lucjan Dobroszycki (eds.), *Kronika Getta Łódzkiego*, Wydawnictwo Łódzkie 1965, vol. I, p. 401, 426.

- ¹²³ Vilna is located some 150-160 km from the Polish and (former) German (East Prussian) borders but merely some 30 km from the border to Belarus. One must further keep in mind that Jewish escapees traveling by foot, who had to look out for German soldiers, would not likely have covered a very long distance daily.
- ¹²⁴ Avraham Tory, *Surviving the Holocaust. The Kovno Ghetto Diary*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge / London 1990, p. 111. In his entry from 17 November 1942 (p. 154) Tory further writes that "The Jewish police [in the Kovno Ghetto] have found two young men, both originally from Poland, who have agreed to carry out the hanging."
- ¹²⁵ Jeanette Wolf, *Mit Bibel und Bebel*, Verlag Neue Gesellschaft, Bonn 1980, p. 33. Wolf writes (*ibid.*) that the camp had about 1,500 inmates.
- ¹²⁶ Josef Katz, *One Who Came Back: The Diary of a Jewish Survivor*, Dryad Press, Takoma Park (ML), 2006, p. 65, 108, 129, 156. Katz' memoirs (not an actual diary, but memoirs in strict chronological order) were written between the early summer of 1945 and the fall of 1946.
- ¹²⁷ Herman Kruk, *The Last Days of the Jerusalem of Lithuania*, *op. cit.*, p. 664.
- ¹²⁸ Toomas Hiio et al. (eds.), *Estonia 1940-1945*, *op. cit.*, pp. 724-725.
- ¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 703.
- ¹³⁰ Herman Kruk, *The Last Days of the Jerusalem of Lithuania*, *op. cit.*, p. 518.
- ¹³¹ Neringa Latvyte-Gustaitiene, "The Genocide of the Jews in the Trakai Region of Lithuania," online:
http://www.jewishgen.org/LITVAK/HTML/OnlineJournals/genocide_of_the_je_ws.htm
- ¹³² Avraham Tory, *Surviving the Holocaust. The Kovno Ghetto Diary*, *op. cit.*, p. 407.
- ¹³³ Joseph Rebhun, *Why Me? Memoirs of Holocaust Survivors*, Wildside Press, Rockville (MD) 2007, p. 173.
- ¹³⁴ J. Schelvis, *Sobibor. A History of a Nazi Death Camp*, *op. cit.*, p. 204, Table 12.9. A seventh transport departed on 13 April, but is improbable that it could have reached Lithuania by 16 April.
- ¹³⁵ Forty-three transports with Dutch Jews departed for Sobibór between 15 July and 12 December. After a lull in the departures, another nine convoys Dutch Jews were sent to Auschwitz between 11 January and 1 March 1943. Cf. Danuta Czech, *Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz-Birkenau*, *op. cit.* Schelvis on the other hand gives the total number of Dutch Auschwitz deportees July 1942 – March 1943 as 46,555; J. Schelvis, *Sobibor. A History of a Nazi Death Camp*, *op. cit.*, p. 198.
- ¹³⁶ Herman Kruk, *The Last Days of the Jerusalem of Lithuania*, *op. cit.*, p. 519.
- ¹³⁷ *Ibid.*
- ¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 350.
- ¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 370.
- ¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 386.
- ¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 396.
- ¹⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 530.
- ¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 521.
- ¹⁴⁴ In his entry from 12 April 1943 Kruk writes under the heading "30,000 fresh victims": "From the German press, I learn that the Jews must leave 8 of the 11

Dutch provinces. This means about 130,000 fresh victims. No one knows if the Jew will be sent to Eastern Europe to work or to be killed. Now it's the turn of the Dutch Jews." *Ibid.*, p. 515. Since the figure of 130,000 is mentioned again in the entry from 30 April, one may conclude that the figure in the heading is an error.

¹⁴⁵ In his entry from 10 August 1942, Kruk writes under the heading "What happened in Oszmiana?"; "About 40 km from Vilna is the small town of Oszmiana, which was annexed to Lithuania only this spring. Until recently it was quite there. Yesterday a train passed through Vilna with Jews who tossed out about 20 letters to those working in the Vilna railroad station. From the letters, it became clear that the Jews come from Oszmiana and are being taken to work in Vievis, a small town 50 km from Vilna. They write that they don't know where they are being taken. They were sure this was the end. Some ran away. Altogether, some 400 persons were taken. Some are in[...] the hospital; some were not taken because they are wounded[...] That means there was an Aktion, that Oszmiana has already been staked out." *Ibid.*, p. 344. In the entry from 28 October the same year Kruk reports that 410 sick and old among the remaining 2,300 Jews in the Oszmiana Ghetto were taken away and shot; *ibid.*, pp. 387-388. The following day Kruk noted down contradictory reports that 800 Jews had been shot; *ibid.*, p. 394.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 525.

¹⁴⁷ Miriam Novitch, *Sobibor. Martyrdom and Revolt*, Holocaust Library, New York 1980, p. 29. Cf. Y. Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka. The Operation Reinhard Death Camps*, *op. cit.*, pp. 109-110.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 157.

¹⁴⁹ Herman Kruk, *The Last Days of the Jerusalem of Lithuania*, *op. cit.*, p. 570.

¹⁵⁰ Hersh Smolar, *The Minsk Ghetto: Soviet-Jewish Partisans against The Nazis*, Holocaust Library, New York 1989, pp. 102-103.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 108.

¹⁵² Hilde Sherman-Zander, *Zwischen Tag und Dunkel. Mädchenjahre im Ghetto*, Ullstein, Frankfurt a. M. /Berlin 1984, pp. 60-61.

¹⁵³ Other sources, such as Reuben Ainsztain, spell the name of this witness as Hersh Smolyar.

¹⁵⁴ Hersh Smolar, *The Minsk Ghetto: Soviet-Jewish Partisans Against The Nazis*, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

¹⁵⁵ Gerald Reitlinger, *Die Endlösung. Hitlers Versuch der Ausrottung der Juden Europas 1939-1945*, Colloquium Verlag, Berlin 1992, pp. 467-468.

¹⁵⁶ Christian Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde. Die deutsche Wirtschafts- und Vernichtungspolitik in Weißrußland*, Hamburger Edition, Hamburg 1999, pp. 761-762.

¹⁵⁷ Karl Loewenstein, *Minsk. Im Lager der deutschen Juden*, Bundeszentrale für Heimatsdienst, Bonn 1961, pp. 23-24.

¹⁵⁸ Rosenberg gives the date as 9 November, and describes the train as being boarded 5 o'clock in the morning and departing on 10 o'clock. It does not seem out of the question that the scheduled departure time was pushed forward for whatever reason and that Rosenberg is actually correct about the date; Heinz Rosenberg, *Jahre des Schreckens[...] und ich blieb übrig, daß ich Dir's ansage*, Steidl Verlag, Göttingen 1985, pp. 17-18.

- ¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 27.
- ¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁶² Karl Loewenstein, Minsk. *Im Lager der deutschen Juden*, *op. cit.*, p. 17
- ¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 20.
- ¹⁶⁴ It is interesting to note in the light of this hypothesis that, according to orthodox historiography, the Jews from this Vienna transport were shot by an *Einsatzkommando* at the outskirts of Kaunas; cf. R. Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews*, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 366.
- ¹⁶⁵ Heinz Rosenberg, *Jahre des Schreckens*, *op. cit.*, pp. 37-38.
- ¹⁶⁶ Karl Loewenstein, Minsk. *Im Lager der deutschen Juden*, *op. cit.*, p. 16.
- ¹⁶⁷ GARF, 7445-2-145, pp. 65f.; quoted in: Jürgen Graf, Carlo Mattogno, *Treblinka. Extermination Camp or Transit Camp?*, *op. cit.*, p. 198. Raul Hilberg, who merely summarizes the contents (*The Destruction of the European Jews*, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 367), gives as an alternative archival source Occ E 3-37.
- ¹⁶⁸ GARF, 7445-2-145, p. 68; quoted in: Jürgen Graf, Carlo Mattogno, *Treblinka. Extermination Camp or Transit Camp?*, *op. cit.*, p. 198.
- ¹⁶⁹ GARF, 7445-2-145, pp. 72f; summarized in: Jürgen Graf, Carlo Mattogno, *Treblinka. Extermination Camp or Transit Camp?*, *op. cit.*, pp. 198-199.
- ¹⁷⁰ Minutes from Jeckeln's interrogation on 14 December 1945 (Major Zwetajew, interrogator; Sergeant Suur, interpreter), Historical State Archives, Riga; quoted in Gerald Fleming, *Hitler and the Final Solution*, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles 1984, pp. 96-97.
- ¹⁷¹ Jukka Rislakki, *The Case for Latvia: Disinformation Campaigns against a Small Nation*, Editions Rodopi, Amsterdam / New York 2008, p. 124.
- ¹⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 123.
- ¹⁷³ William W. Mishell, *Kaddish for Kovno. Life and Death in a Lithuanian Ghetto 1941-1945*, Chicago Review Press, Chicago 1988, pp. 127-128.
- ¹⁷⁴ Rich Cohen, *The Avengers: A Jewish War Story*, Vintage Books, New York 2001, pp. 87-88.
- ¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 196.
- ¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 255.
- ¹⁷⁷ *Memoir: The Holocaust Recalled*,
http://migs.concordia.ca/memoirs/Reich/Rei_mem.html
- ¹⁷⁸ Toomas Hiio et al. (eds.), *Estonia 1940-1945*, *op. cit.*, p. 722.
- ¹⁷⁹ Wolfgang Benz, Barbara Distel, *Der Ort des Terrors: Geschichte der national-sozialistischen Konzentrationslager*, Vol. 8, Verlag C.H. Beck, Munich 2008, pp. 167-168.
- ¹⁸⁰ Monatsbericht SS-Lagerarzt, 25.11.1943, in: EAM (*Eesti Ajaloomuseum*, Estonian History Museum), D 152/2/40. (Source in original). The reports of the Vaivara SS-Lagerarzt were discovered only in 2002 by Estonian historian Mee- lis Maripuu; cf. *ibid.*, p. 144, note 4.
- ¹⁸¹ The exact date was 3-4 February. 23 sick inmates were evacuated on horseback and 414 on foot. The transport took place under Red Army fire and as a result of the exerting march some inmates died after arriving at the Kuremäe camp. Toomas Hiio et al. (eds.), *Estonia 1940-1945*, *op. cit.*, p. 729.

- ¹⁸² A witness named Markus Gordon on the other hand testified that the number of inmates at the Kuremäe camp prior to the transfer from Soski amounted to some 800, not 444 as recorded by Bodman. The author of this article has unfortunately not had the opportunity to directly access Gordon's account, which is referenced in Toomas Hiio et al. (eds.), *Estonia 1940-1945*, *op. cit.*, p. 726.
- ¹⁸³ Other sources state that the *Lagerführer* was a certain Eugen Einget Wurth; cf. Toomas Hiio et al. (eds.), *Estonia 1940-1945*, *op. cit.*, p. 722.
- ¹⁸⁴ *Urteil gegen Scharfetter*, 1.2.1980, in: *Landgericht Stade*, 9 Ks /78-23/78. (Note in original). The Estonian name of the Goldfields camp was Kohtla, not to be confused with the nearby Kohtla-Järve camp.
- ¹⁸⁵ *Memoir: The Holocaust Recalled*, *op. cit.*
- ¹⁸⁶ Wolfgang Benz, Barbara Distel, *Der Ort des Terrors*, *op. cit.*, pp. 175-176.
- ¹⁸⁷ Herman Kruk, *The Last Days of the Jerusalem of Lithuania*, *op. cit.*, p. 667ff.
- ¹⁸⁸ Another source states that 1,000 Jews from Vilnius arrived at the Kohtla railway station on 4 September 1943, whereof one half were taken to the Ereda camp and the other half to Vaivara – this would support the dating found in the Distel account; Toomas Hiio et al. (eds.), *Estonia 1940-1945*, *op. cit.*, p. 731.
- ¹⁸⁹ Other sources gives the name of this place as “Kohtla-Järve”; cf. Lukáš Přibyl, “Die Geschichte des Theresienstädter Transports ‘Be’ nach Estland,” in *Theresienstädter Studien und Dokumente 2001*, Institut Theresienstädter Initiative, Prague 2001, p. 164.
- ¹⁹⁰ http://migs.concordia.ca/memoirs/frankel_zaltzman_paula/frankel_zaltzman_paula_04.htm
- ¹⁹¹ *The Holocaust in Kraslava*, http://www.seligman.org.il/kraslava_holocaust.html
- ¹⁹² Jack Ratz, *Endless Miracles*, Shengold Publishers, New York 1998, p. 43.
- ¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

Origins and Functions of the Birkenau Camp

Carlo Mattogno

Robert Jan van Pelt was one of the first writers to mention the importance of Auschwitz in SS plans for the colonization of the Eastern occupied territories. In van Pelt's book written in collaboration with Deborah Dwork, he stated:¹

"The creation of Birkenau camp, which, by the end of 1942, had become a major center for the annihilation of Europe's Jews, was directly connected to Himmler's program to transform Auschwitz into a paradigm of German settlement in the East."

Van Pelt later attempted to develop this thesis with particular reference to Upper Silesia,² but further research then documented the fact that this paradigm formed part of a much broader project, the "*Generalplan Ost*," the "General Plan for the East," which involved the camps of Birkenau, Lublin and Stutthof as mere manpower-collection camps, first of Soviet POWs, then of Jews. This new interpretation has been supported, in particular, by Jan Erik Schulte, author of an important article entitled "Vom Arbeits- zum Vernichtungslager. Die Entstehungsgeschichte von Auschwitz-Birkenau 1941/42" ("From Labor Camps to Extermination Camps. History of the Origins of Auschwitz-Birkenau 1941-1942"),³ outlining, in particular, the early history of Birkenau camp, and the manner in which it fit into the "*Generalplan Ost*."

Generalplan Ost: Introduction of Deportees from the West

Let us summarize the essential points of the Plan, fitting them into a broader perspective.

In the so-called *Krakow Notes*, the "autobiography"/jailhouse confession attributed to Rudolf Höss, the first commandant of Auschwitz, appears the passage:⁴

"Before the war, the concentration camps were used to protect Germany from its internal enemies, but because of the war Himmler ordered that their main purpose now was to serve the war effort. Every possible prisoner was to become a defense plant worker; every Kommandant was to have his camp absolutely ready for this purpose. According to Himmler's orders Auschwitz was to become a tremendous prisoner de-

fense center. His announcement during his visit in March 1941 was clear enough in this respect. The following plans for the camp spoke clearly enough: preparation of the camp for 100,000 POWs, the remodeling of the old camp for 30,000 prisoners, and the allocation for the 'Buna' [synthetic rubber] factory of 10,000 prisoners."

Schulte noted that such a statement "no longer appeared credible,"⁵ and he was completely right. On this visit, Himmler in his report drawn up on 17 March 1941 by SS-Untersturmführer Heinrich Schwarz, prisoner labor deployment head (*Häftlingseinsatzführer*) at Auschwitz, and addressed to the head of the Central Section I/5 of the SS-Hauptamt Haushalt und Bauten (Central Logistics and Construction Office of the SS), directed by SS-Gruppenführer Oswald Pohl, limits himself to stating as follows:

"On 1 March 1941, at 15.30 hours, Reichsführer-SS and Head of the German Police arrived at Auschwitz. The Reichsführer-SS was very satisfied by the progress and the work done in Auschwitz concentration camp, which was recognised by Reichsführer-SS during the inspection in the company of the Inspector of Concentration Camps, SS-Oberführer Glücks, and has expressed his fullest appreciation to the camp commandant, SS-Sturmbannführer Höss"

German original:⁶

"Am 1.3.41, 15.30 Uhr traf der Reichsführer SS und Chef der Deutschen Polizei im K.L. Auschwitz ein. Über den Fortschritt und die geleisteten Arbeiten im K.L. Au. die bei der Besichtigung vom Reichsführer SS in Begleitung des Inspektors der K.L. SS-Oberführer Glücks festgestellt worden sind, war der Reichsführer SS sehr befriedigt und sprach dem Kommandanten des K.L. Au. SS-Sturmbannführer Höß seine vollste Anerkennung aus."

No mention of the construction of the Birkenau camp for 100,000 *Kriegsgefangene*, which is also a bit of a misnomer, because the POWs could only have been Soviets, but the Russian campaign did not even begin until 3 months later.

The historiography of the Auschwitz Museum, in its discussion of the origins of Birkenau camp, has remained anchored in the contradictory declarations attributed to Höss from the very outset, and as a result remains rather ambiguous. This historiography fits the origins of the camp into the presumed order to exterminate the Jews allegedly issued by Himmler to Höss in the summer of 1941, which was to have been carried out at Auschwitz, but only draws the logical consequence in an indirect manner. Franciszek Piper has in fact explicitly stated as follows:⁷

"In the summer of 1941, Himmler personally decided to fit the Auschwitz concentration camp into the framework of the extermination of the Jews."

This would imply that the planning of Birkenau camp arose from this order; on the other hand, this interpretation is in conflict with the documents, which attest that this camp was planned and built as a *Kriegsgefangenenlager*, as a POW camp. To overcome this difficulty, the same historiography, ignoring the great mass of proof to the contrary adduced by Jean-Claude Pressac, persists in affirming that the crematorium planned for the requirements of the *Kriegsgefangenenlager* was designed as a homicidal gas chamber from the very outset. This is how Piper expresses his contention:⁸

"After Himmler ordered the expansion of the camp during his inspection of Auschwitz in March 1941, Amt II-Bauten (Construction Office II) of the SS-Hauptamt Haushalt und Bauten drew up a preliminary plan for construction of a camp at Birkenau, intended for 125,000 POWs. With a view to accomplishment of this task, he created a Sonderbauleitung (Special Construction Administration), on 1 October 1941, for the construction of a Waffen-SS POW camp, in Auschwitz concentration camp, headed by Karl Bischoff."

In 1946, the Polish judge Jan Sehn, while recognizing that Birkenau camp was intended for prisoners of war, insinuated:¹⁰

"For the construction of this camp, a special section called the 'Sonderbauleitung'^{19]} was created, within the construction management. In official correspondence, it is explicitly stated that the camp which had just been constructed was intended for the 'implementation of inmate special treatment' (Durchführung der Sonderbehandlung)."

Since Sehn interpreted the words "special treatment" as a "code word" for the alleged mass extermination, the real reason for building Birkenau camp was thus assumed to be extermination. Piper, by contrast, states that the new crematorium (the future Crematorium II) "was designed for POWs"¹¹, which is beyond doubt. On 12 November 1941, after a telephone conversation with a representative of the Topf company, Bischoff, at that time *Bau-leiter* (construction superintendent) of Auschwitz, sent the following letter to the *Rüstungskommando* (armaments command) of Weimar:

"The Topf & Söhne company, specialists in technical combustion plants, Erfurt, has been entrusted by this office with the task of constructing a cremation installation, to be finished as quickly as possible, because of the annexation to Auschwitz concentration camp of a POW camp. The POW camp will be occupied by nearly 120,000 Russians in

the very near future. Construction of the cremation installation is therefore absolutely necessary to prevent epidemics and other hazards."

German original:¹²

"Die Firma Topf & Söhne, Feuerungstechn. Anlagen, Erfurt hat von der hiesigen Dienststelle den Auftrag erhalten, schnellstens eine Verbrennungsanlage aufzubauen, da dem Konzentrationslager Auschwitz ein Kriegsgefangenenlager angegliedert wurde, das in kürzester Zeit mit ca. 120000 Russen belegt wird. Der Bau der Einäscherungsanlage ist deshalb dringend notwendig geworden um Seuchen und andere Gefahren zu verhüten."

Piper, however, then adds:¹³

"Since the crematorium, equipped with five crematory ovens, was planned for the mass extermination of Jews, it was decided to construct at the same time a separate crematorium for the prisoners of war directly on the spot at Birkenau, which was to receive two crematory ovens with three muffles each."

Since the cost estimate of these two ovens dates to 12 February 1942, while the first designs for the new crematorium for the Birkenau camp¹⁴ were drawn up on 15 January,¹⁵ it is clear that, to Piper, this was planned for homicidal purposes, notwithstanding the proof to the contrary adduced by Pressac. And from the moment that the crematorium is mentioned already in the "Explanatory Report on the Preliminary Draft for the New Construction of the Prisoner-of-War Camp for the Waffen-SS, Auschwitz, Upper Silesia" (*Erläuterungsbericht zum Vorentwurf für den Neubau des Kriegsgefangenenlagers der Waffen-SS, Auschwitz O/S*) dated 30 October 1941,¹⁶ in practice, even Piper comes to insinuate that the Birkenau camp was constructed in compliance with the alleged extermination order issued to Höss by Himmler in June 1941.

In reality, Himmler was thinking of something else entirely at the time.

On 24 June 1941, he ordered his best expert in the sector, *SS-Oberführer* Prof. Dr. Konrad Meyer-Hetling, to draw up the German colonization plans for the Eastern territories incorporated by Germany (particularly for the *Reichsgaue* Danzig-West Prussia and Wartheland). On 15 July, Meyer-Hetling completed a study entitled "*Generalplan Ost*."¹⁷ The project, in its essential outlines, had already been delineated for Poland by E. Wetzel and G. Hecht in a secret memorandum entitled "*Die Frage der Behandlung der Bevölkerung der ehemaligen polnischen Gebietes nach rassenspolitischen Gesichtspunkte*" ("The Question of the Treatment of the

Population of the ex-Polish Territory from the Politico-Racial Point of View”). Here “the purpose of Eastern policy” was defined as follows:¹⁸

“The purpose of German policy in the new territories of the Reich should be the creation of a racially homogenous and therefore spiritually and psychologically homogenous population.”

This elimination consisted in a transfer of populations, which also included exceptions which constituted “*Sonderbehandlung*,” or “Special Treatment”.²⁰

“Sonderbehandlung of children of value from a racial point of view.

“A great proportion of the population strata of the non-Germanizable Polish people for national/racial motives [aus völkischen Gründen] will by contrast be expelled into the remaining Polish territory. But children of value from the racial point of view^[19] are however, to be excluded from the transport and brought up in the Old Reich, in appropriate educational institutions, possibly according to the model of the ex-military orphanage in Potsdam or in a German family environment.”

“Sonderbehandlung of non-Polish minorities:

As already stated, the sphere of the new territories of the Reich includes Kashubians in West Prussia, the Masurs in West and East Prussia, Wasserpölen^[21] and Slonzaks in Upper Silesia. These minorities, like parts of the Kashubians and Wasserpölen, include considerable numbers of Slavicized German ethnics, on the whole have not behaved as Polish chauvinists; thus, for this reason, they are sometimes very pro-German politically. Members of the above-mentioned minorities who identify themselves with the Poles must be dealt with like Polish nationalists and expelled. But the great mass of the population of these minorities should be left in their homeland and should not be subjected to any particular restrictions on their lives.”²²

The Jews were to be transferred into the non-incorporated Polish territories (General Gouvernement):²⁴

“The remaining Polish territory, which already contains a population of 12,700,000 persons, would thus have a population of approximately 19,300,000 persons.^[23] Another approximately 800,000 Jews from the Reich (Old Reich, Ostmark [Austria], Sudetengau [Sudetenland] and the Protectorate [Bohemia and Moravia]) would be added to that total. Another 530,000 Jews would be expelled, in addition to the ex-Polish territories incorporated into the Reich.”

As regards the treatment of these populations, the principle was to separate and counter-balance Jews and Poles. The Jews were, to some extent, to enjoy a somewhat less severe form of treatment:

“To render the Jews apt for emigration, it will be advisable to provide them with better educational instruction at any rate. The Jewish political associations must be prohibited, just like the Polish ones. By contrast, the Jewish cultural associations must be tolerated a little more easily than the Polish ones. We certainly need to leave the Jews a freer hand in this regard than the Poles, since the Jews do not have a real political strength, like the Poles have their ideology of Greater Poland. But that the well-known essence of Judaism is its tendency towards business and political and economic enterprise must naturally be kept in mind at all times. The Yiddish language may be permitted in everyday life. On the other hand, it is impossible [to permit] the written Jewish language in official relations.”

This is followed by other restrictions, relating to newspapers, names, agricultural properties, and measures to avoid population increase, such as abortion.²⁵

Tapping the Deportees for Construction Labor

On 17 July 1941, Himmler, in his capacity as “*Reichskommissar* for the Consolidation of Germanism” (*Reichskommissar für die Festigung deutschen Volkstums*)²⁶ appointed SS-Brigadeführer Odilo Globocnik, who was SS- und Polizeiführer of Lublin, “Basic SS and Police Construction Head in the New Eastern Territory” (*Beauftragte für die Errichtung der SS- und Polizeistützpunkte im neuen Ostraum*). In a note drawn up on 21 July 1941, point 13, Himmler ordered that the Head of the *Reichsführer-SS* was to implement the chain of command by autumn “for the construction of bases for the SS and police in the new Eastern territories.”²⁷ As Schulte writes:²⁸

“The other orders issued by Himmler at Lublin also make it obvious that he wished to employ the inmates for measures linked to the colonization of the East.”

Himmler’s ambitious projects culminated in his secret order of 5 December 1941 on the “Employment of Concentration Camp Inmates” transmitted to the head of the *Reichssicherheitshauptamt* (Central Reich Security Office), SS-Gruppenführer Reinhard Heydrich, to Inspector of Concentration Camps SS-Brigadeführer Richard Glücks, to all camp commandants and to

*SS-Gruppenführer Oswald Pohl, head of the SS-Hauptamt Verwaltung und Wirtschaft (SS Central Administrative and Economic Office):*²⁹

"The SS construction projects, particularly since the [outbreak of the] war, require that we undertake large-scale preparatory measures, starting immediately. In particular, this means procuring the manpower required for construction. The SS is in the unusually favorable position of being able to derive and train its manpower from among concentration camp inmates. I have therefore assigned the head of the SS-Hauptamt Verwaltung und Wirtschaft, SS-Gruppenführer Pohl, with responsibility for training the following manpower for the large-scale construction projects to be undertaken following the conclusion of peace:

"1) at least 5,000 stone cutters

"2) at least 10,000 bricklayers.

"When one considers that there were only 4,000 qualified stone cutters in all of Germany before the war, one can easily gauge the scope of this training work. But we need these 5,000 stone cutters, because we have already received an order from the Führer according to which the Deutsche Erd- und Steinwerke GmbH, as an SS undertaking, upon the conclusion of the peace, is to supply at least 10,000 m³ of granite per year for the Führer's large-scale construction projects. This is more than the stone quarries of the Old Reich supplied before the war."

Schulte also remarks:³⁰

"For the construction measures of the 'Generalplan Ost', Meyer calculated a requirement of 850,000 workers for the first five years, including 400,000 for the colonization of territories in the occupied Soviet Union. For the second five-year plan, he anticipated another 580,000 men, including 130,000 employed in the new "Ostraum" (Eastern territories)."

Inclusion and Exploitation of POWs with Deportees

To obtain the necessary manpower, Himmler, in July 1941, ordered the construction of a concentration camp at Lublin, planned for 25,000-50,000 inmates not further specified. But when the initial military successes against the Soviet Union caused a great number of prisoners to fall into German hands, Himmler decided that the labor projects were to be carried out by Soviet prisoners of war and as a result ordered the creation of a *Kriegsgefangenenlager* at Lublin, the first plan for which dates back to 7 October 1941.³¹

Cognizance for the construction work was assigned to *SS-Oberführer* Hans Kammler, head of the Amt II-Bauten (Office II-Construction) of the

SS-Hauptamt Haushalt und Bauten. On 1 February 1942, was created the SS-Wirtschafts-Verwaltungshauptamt (Central SS Administrative and Economic Office), founding the *Hauptamt Verwaltung und Wirtschaft* and the *Hauptamt Haushalt und Bauten*, in which *Amt II* (Office II) became *Amtsgruppe C* (Office Group C), at all times directed by Kammler.

On 1 November 1941, he sent to the *Zentralbauleitung der Waffen-SS und Polizei* at Lublin the post-dated order for construction of the camp:

"I hereby issue the order to construct a Kriegsgefangenenlager at Lublin to house 125,000 POWs" ["Der Baubefehl für die Errichtung eines Kriegsgefangenenlagers in Lublin zur Unterbringung von 125,000 Kriegsgefangene wird hiermit erteilt."]³²

But the camp capacity was soon expanded to 150,000 prisoners. On 8 December, Kammler transmitted the following order to the local *Zentralbauleitung*:

"With referenc³³e to the construction order dated 1 November 1941, I hereby issue the expanded construction order for the creation of a POW camp at Lublin for the total manpower force of 150,000 prisoners or inmates." ["Im Nachgang zum Baubefehl vom 1.11.41 erteile ich hiermit den erweiterten Baubefehl zur Errichtung eines Kriegsgefangenenlagers in Lublin für eine Gesamtkopfzahl von 150000 Kriegsgefangenen bzw. Häftlingen."]

A few weeks later, on 26 November, Globocnik, in his capacity as *Beauftragte für die Errichtung der SS- und Polizeistützpunkte im neuen Ostraum*, ordered the *Zentralbauleitung* of Lublin "to construct a resupply transit camp [*Durchgangsnachschublager*] for the *Höhere SS- und Polizeiführer* of South Russia and Caucasia, which consisted of 13 housing barracks, including 11 warehouses."³⁴ The camp was completed and commissioned on 11 September 1942.³⁵ This was intended to resupply the various offices assigned to the construction projects in the Eastern territories. A circular letter from the head of the *Amt CV/Zentrale Bauinspektion* (Office CV/Central Construction Project Inspection Office), *SS-Sturmabführer* Lenzer, dated 1 September 1942 with subject "SS Offices Assigned to the Construction Projects and Measures in the Occupied Territories" (*SS-Baudienststellen und Baumassnahmen in den besetzten Gebieten insbesondere im Ostraum*), ordered that every construction program be divided into exterior work (*A-Arbeiten*) and interior work (*B-Arbeiten*), and required all construction groups (*Baugruppen*) to advise, by 1 November, which projects had been completed in 1942 and which could be completed by 1 April 1943.³⁶

The origins of Birkenau camp, which precisely matched the initial purposes of the Lublin camp, form part of this context as well. This was planned on 30 October 1941, also for 125,000 prisoners, for whom 174 housing barracks were planned (*Gefangenenunterkunftbaracken*), each of them capable of housing a maximum number of 744 persons³⁷, but the pertinent construction order from Kammler was also scheduled for reporting on 1 November:³⁸

"I hereby issue the related construction order for a Kriegsgefangenenlager at Auschwitz intended to house 125,000 POWs" ["Der Baubefehl für die Errichtung eines Kriegsgefangenenlagers in Auschwitz zur Unterbringung von 125,000 Kriegsgefangene wird hiermit erteilt."]

The first plans of the camp, the *Lageplan des Kriegsgefangenenlagers-Auschwitz O.S* (Site Plan of Auschwitz POW Camp, Upper Silesia) of 7 and 14 October 1941³⁹ contemplated 174 housing barracks, but already that of 5 January 1942⁴⁰ contained 282, that of 6 June⁴¹ 360 and that of 16 August 513.⁴² The capacity is indicated only in the last one. This plan appears divided into four sectors, of them three with 153 housing barracks each per 60,000 prisoners and one with 54 housing barracks for 20,000 prisoners, so that the total capacity was 200,000 prisoners. The plan of 6 June 1942 consists of two sectors with 153 housing barracks each and one with 54 barracks; therefore the anticipated manpower force should have been 140,000 prisoners, but, as we shall soon see, it was 150,000. On the other hand, the 282 housing barracks of the plan of 5 January 1942 were clearly intended for 125,000 persons. In practice, from 7 and 14 October 1941 to 16 August 1942, the number of persons anticipated for each housing barrack decreased by half ($125,000 \div 174 = 718$ to $(200,000 \div 513) = 390$).

The first known mention of an increase in the capacity of the *Kriegsgefangenenlager* from 125,000 to 150,000 POWs is found in a letter from Kammler to *SS-Hauptsturmführer* Karl Bischof, head of the *Auschwitz Zentralbauleitung*,⁴³ dated 22 June 1942:⁴⁴

"Please let me know immediately how many barracks you need for completion of the POW camp to house 150,000 POWs" ["Erbitte umgehend Mitteilung wieviele Baracken Sie zur Fertigstellung des Kriegsgefangenenlagers zur Unterbringung von 150000 Kriegsgefangenen benötigen."]

In a letter to Amt C V of the *SS-Wirtschafts-Verwaltungshauptamt* dated 29 June, Bischoff wrote that until that time, for the third financial year of the war, 264 housing barracks had been authorized, stating:

“Since according to the order from the Reichsführer-SS and head of the German police, the camp had to be expanded from 125,000 POWs to 150,000 POWs, the following Bauwerke^[45] were still absolutely necessary for completion of the camp, which in part were indicated in the list of the cubic capacity of the plenipotentiary for wooden construction projects dated 25 May 1942.” [“Da laut Befehl des Reichsführer SS und Chef der Deutschen Polizei das Lager von 125,0000 Kriegsgefangenen auf 150000 Kriegsgefangene erweitert werden soll, sind zur Fertigstellung des Lagers jedoch noch unbedingt folgende Bauwerke erforderlich, die bereits zum Teil bei der Aufstellung des B.F.H.⁴⁶-Volumens für das Kriegsgefangenenlager vom 25.5.1942 angegeben waren.”]

The additional housing barracks were 63 *Unterkunftbaracken* type 260/9 [41 by 10 meters] and 36 type IV/3 [20 by 8 meters].⁴⁷ In total, for a capacity of 150,000 prisoners, 363 barracks were therefore anticipated, therefore the plan of 6 June 1942 no doubt referred to the new manpower force ordered by Himmler.

At Lublin, the expansion of the camp to 150,000 prisoners had already been decided upon: the pertinent plan bears the date of 23 March 1942.⁴⁸

The expansion of the *Kriegsgefangenenlager* of Birkenau to 200,000 persons was ordered by Himmler during his visit to Auschwitz on 17 and 18 July 1942. In a letter dated 3 August 1942, addressed to the Amt C V of the *SS-Wirtschafts-Verwaltungshauptamt*, Bischoff wrote:⁴⁹

“The expansion of the project has been presented to the head of the group of officers C SS-Brigadeführer and Generalmajor der Waffen-SS Dr of Engineering Kammler during the Reichsführer’s visit on 17 and 18 July 1942. Please indicate your approval on a copy of the annexed plan and return it to us promptly.” [“Die Erweiterung der Planung hat anlässlich des Reichsführer-Besuches am 17. und 18. Juli 1942 dem Amtgruppenschef C SS-Brigadeführer und Generalmajor der Waffen-SS Dr. Ing. Kammler vorgelegen und wird um entsprechenden Genehmigungsvermerk auf 1 Exemplar des beiliegenden Lageplanes und baldige Rücksendung desselben gebeten.”]

And on 27 August, Bischoff communicated to the same office:⁵⁰

“The annexed plan has already taken account of the expansion of the capacity of the camp for POWS recently requested to 200,000 persons.” [“In beiliegendem Lageplan ist der neuerdings geforderte Ausbau des Kriegsgefangenenlagers auf eine Belegstärke von 200.000 Mann bereits berücksichtigt.”]

The annexed plan was the plan mentioned below, dated 16 August 1942.

The “*Generalplan Ost*” initially also reiterated the Stutthof camp. Himmler visited it on 23 November 1941 and on 19 December he wrote as follows to SS-Gruppenführer Pohl:⁵¹

“I have reached the conclusion that Stutthof is of very great importance for the future colonization of the Gau of Danzig-West Prussia [...]. Stutthof must moreover be expanded in the sense that in one camp they can house 20,000 Russians, with whom we can then carry out the colonization plan for the Gau of Danzig-Prussia.” [“Ich bin zu der Überzeugung gekommen, daß Stutthof von größter Bedeutung für die spätere Besiedlung des Gaues Danzig-Westpreußen ist. [...] Stutthof muß außerdem in der Richtung ausgebaut werden, da es in einem Lager später 20000 Russen aufnehmen kann, mit denen wir dann den Siedlungsaufbau des Gaues Danzig-Westpreußen vollziehen können.”]

According to Schulte:⁵²

“[...] including Stutthof, Himmler, Pohl and Kammler, as a result, were relying on a total of 300,000 Soviet POWs or inmates by mid-December 1941; in the context of the subsequent construction phase, this figure was to be increased to at least 375,000 Soviet POWs or inmates, to be employed for tasks relating to the colonization of the East.”

Nevertheless, on the one hand, the POWs actually delivered to the camps were very few—at Auschwitz, about 10,000 by the beginning of October 1941—and on the other hand, they were dying en masse from the disastrous living and working conditions—at Auschwitz, according to the Death Books (*Totenbuch*), 8,320 of them died in only 144 days.⁵³

*“For Himmler and Pohl,” Schulte remarked, “the problem again arose of who should build the SS and Police bases and the large settlements in the ‘new space in the East’ and who should expand the local infrastructures. After the brutal treatment in the SS POW camps and Armed Forces base camps, the Red Army POWs were no longer available as manpower, at least for the foreseeable future. Since there was no question of amending the gigantic plans, the direction the SS was to take a new group of victims into consideration as forced workers.”*⁵⁴

This group was the Jews, who

“[...] had to carry forward the colonization of the East planned by the SS and construct a gigantic road network which was to serve not only for military purposes but also, and above all, as a colonizing strategy. The “Generalplan Ost” of June 1942 demonstrated, not without reason, the importance of the road network, which should have provided the

link between the individual settlements. As Adolf Hitler stressed in mid-October 1941, this road network was to be built chiefly by Soviet POWs. As a result, Organisation Todt had also planned the employment of Red Army POWs for construction of the IV transit road⁵⁵. When they were no longer available, Jewish workers were substituted for their deceased predecessors. Deported Jews were also to be employed for this purpose. In January 1942, there were also plans to use Jews for road building work in the Ukraine.”⁵⁶

It was to precisely these road building projects that Heydrich was referring in the well known minutes of the Wannsee Conference:⁵⁷

“Under adequate management, within the context of the Final Solution, the Jews should travel in an appropriate manner to the labor employment to the East. In great working columns, separated by sex, the able-bodied Jews should be taken to these territories to build roads^[58] doing this, without doubt a great proportion of them will perish through natural attrition.” [“Unter entsprechender Leitung sollen nun im Zuge der Endlösung die Juden in geeigneter Weise im Osten zum Arbeitseinsatz kommen. In großen Arbeitskolonnen, unter Trennung der Geschlechter, werden die arbeitsfähigen Juden straßenbauend in diese Gebiete geführt, wobei zweifellos ein Großteil durch natürliche Verminderung ausfallen wird.”]⁵⁹

The SS were also thinking of the reclamation of the swampy territories of the Pripet, which extended between Poland and White Ruthenia, as is attested, among other things, by two studies which appeared in December 1941 and June 1942 in the *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik* (Geopolitical Review): “*Die Pripjetsümpfe als Entwässerungsproblem*” (The Pripet Marshes as Draining Problem), by Richard Bergius, and “Pripjet-Polesien, Land und Leute” (Pripet-Polesia, Territory and Inhabitants), by Hansjulius Schepers⁶⁰. Moreover, the idea of a network of canals linking the Black Sea to the Baltic (*Wasserstraßenverbindung*) had already been advanced by Alfred Rosenberg on 8 May 1941, in a directive for a *Reichskommissariat* in the Eastern territories.⁶¹

In this context, on 26 January 1942, Himmler ordered Glücks as follows:⁶²

“As no more Russian prisoners of war are expected in the near future, I shall send to the camps a large number of Jews and Jewesses who will be sent out of Germany. Make the necessary arrangements for the reception of 100,000 male Jews and up to 50,000 Jewesses into the concentration camps during the next 4 weeks. The concentration camps

will have to deal with major economic problems and tasks in the next weeks. SS Gruppenfuehrer Pohl will inform you of particulars.” (Translation *Trial of War Criminals*, vol. V, p. 365) [“Nachdem russische Kriegsgefangene in der nächsten Zeit nicht zu erwarten sind, werde ich von den Juden und Jüdinnen, die aus Deutschland ausgewandert werden, eine große Anzahl in die Lager schicken. Richten Sie darauf ein, in den nächsten 4 Wochen 100000 männliche Juden und bis zu 50000 Jüdinnen in die KL aufzunehmen. Große wirtschaftliche Aufgaben und Aufträge werden in den nächsten Wochen an die Konzentrationslager herantreten. SS-Gruppenführer Pohl wird Sie im einzelnen unterrichten.”]

Himmler considered these 150,000 Jewish inmates to constitute “primarily, manpower for the ‘*Generalplan Ost*.’”⁶³

In conformity with the above-mentioned directives, the first transports sent to Auschwitz contained only able-bodied Jews who were immediately registered.

On 16 February 1942 Martin Luther, official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, sent a teletype informing the German ambassador at Bratislava (Pressburg) that “in the framework of the provisions for the Final Solution of the Jewish question in Europe” (*im Zuge der Massnahmen zur Endlösung der europäischen Judenfrage*), the government of the Reich was prepared to transfer immediately “20,000 young, strong Slovakian Jews” (20.000 *junge kräftige slowakische Juden*) to the East (*nach den Osten*), where there was a need for manpower (*wo Arbeitseinsatzbedarf besteht*).⁶⁴ Approximately 10,000 Jews were sent to Auschwitz.

On 22 June 1942, SS-*Sturmbannführer* Adolf Eichmann wrote a letter addressed to the Embassy advisor Franz Rademacher, of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with the subject “Labor deployment of Jews from France, Belgium and Holland,” in which he wrote:

“We plan to transport to Auschwitz camp for labor use starting in mid-July or the beginning of August of this year, in special trains, traveling every day, carrying 1,000 persons each, initially with approximately 40,000 Jews from the occupied French territory, 40,000 Jews from Holland and 10,000 Jews from Belgium.” [“Es ist vorgesehen, ab Mitte Juli bzw. Anfang August ds. Jrs. in täglich verkehrenden Sonderzügen zu je 1,000 Personen zunächst etwa 40,000 Juden aus dem besetzten französischen Gebiet, 40,000 Juden aus den Niederlanden und 10,000 Juden aus Belgien zum Arbeitseinsatz in das Lager Auschwitz abzubefördern.”]

But as early as 10 March 1942, *SS-Hauptsturmführer* Theodor Dannecker, official in charge of Jewish affairs in France, with reference to the meeting held on 4 March at Office IV B 4 of the *Reichssicherheitshauptamt*, wrote that they could undertake preliminary negotiations with the French authorities “with a view to the deportation of approximately 5,000 Jews to the East” (*wegen des Abschubs von rd. 5000 Juden nach dem Osten*).

“In this regard,” Dannecker remarked, “we must first of all process able-bodied male Jews, no older than 55 years of age” [“Dabei habe es sich zunächst um männliche, arbeitsfähige Juden, nicht über 55 Jahre, zu handeln.”]⁶⁵

The following table summarizes the data relating to the first 18 Jewish transports arriving at Auschwitz from Slovakia and France.⁶⁶

Date [d/m]	#	Origin	# Men	IDs	# Women	IDs
26/3	999	Slovakia	-	-	999	1000-1998
28/3	798	Slovakia	-	-	798	1999-2796
30/3	1112	Compiègne	1112	27533-28644	-	-
2/4	965	Slovakia	-	-	965	2797-3761
3/4	997	Slovakia	-	-	997	3763-3812, 3814-4760
13/4	1077	Slovakia	634	28903-29536	443	4761-5203
17/4	1000	Slovakia	973	29832-30804	27	5204-5230
19/4	1000	Slovakia	464	31418-31881	536	5233-5768
23/4	1000	Slovakia	543	31942-32484	457	5769-6225
24/4	1000	Slovakia	442	32649-33090	558	6226-6783
29/4	723	Slovakia	423	33286-33708	300	7108-7407
22/5	1000	KL Lublin	1000	36132-37131	-	-
7/6	1000	Compiègne	1000	38177-39176	-	-
20/6	659	Slovakia	404	39923-40326	255	7678-7932
24/6	999	Drancy	933	40681-41613	66	7961-8026
27/6	1000	Pithiviers	1000	41773-42772	-	-
30/6	1038	Beaune-La Rolande	1004	42777-43780	34	8051-8084
30/6	400	KL Lublin	400	43833-44232	-	-
Total	16,767		10,332		6,435	

Schulte himself acknowledges that

*“[...] by order of the Reichsführer-SS, ‘able-bodied’ Jews, in particular, were to continue to be deported to Auschwitz,”*⁶⁷

and that

*“Himmler and Pohl, at the beginning of June 1942, still thought of Auschwitz as a forced-labor camp— primarily filled with Jewish inmates—for the “colonization of the East.”*⁶⁸

As a result, Schulte concludes, “the mass extermination was not considered a priority matter.”⁶⁹

But can all this be reconciled with the alleged extermination of the Jews?

Schulte states:⁷⁰

“For the SS, at Auschwitz it was not unusual for their camp to serve at the same time as a killing center and a forced-labor center. In the late summer and autumn of 1941 two categories of Soviet POWs had been catalogued, one for execution, the other for work.”

In this context, he testified to—in a note—the first alleged homicidal gassing with Zyklon B in the cellar (“Bunker”) of Block 11 of the *Stamm-lager*:

*“In September or December 1941, after the Soviet POWs had already been killed in provisional gas chambers in the main camp, a gas chamber was built in Crematorium I” (emphasis added)*⁷¹.

Commutations of Death Sentences of Soviet POWs

The first transports of Soviet prisoners arrived at Auschwitz on 7 October 1941. The sending of these transports was ordered in conformity with the “Provisions for the Handling of Soviet POWs in all POW camps” (*Anordnungen für die Behandlung sowjetischer Kriegsgefangenen in allen Kriegsgefangenenlagern*) issued on 8 September 1941 by the High Command of the Armed Forces (*Oberkommando der Wehrmacht*). These provisions prescribed among other things, the location in the POW camps of Russian soldiers and civilians and to sort them into the following three groups:

- a. politically undesirable (*politisch Unerwünschte*)
- b. politically non-dangerous (*politisch Ungefährliche*)
- c. politically particularly trustworthy (*politisch besonders Vertrauenswürdige*).

The decision as to who were the “politically undesirable elements” was left up to the *Einsatzkommando* of the Security Police and the Security Service.⁷²

These provisions were reissued in the directives of 17 July 1941 (*Einsatzbefehl/operational order/ no. 8*) relating to the installation in the POW

camps of *Kommandos* of the Security Police and Security Service (Heydrich), to whom the control of all camp inmates was assigned, as well as:

"[...] the identification and subsequent disposition of:

a) intolerable elements from the political, criminal or other points of view among them, and

b) those persons who may be employed for the reconstruction of the occupied territories."

Every week, the heads of the *Einsatzkommandos* had to send a report to the *Reichssicherheitshauptamt*, which, based on the reports, would have communicated the measures to take, including execution.⁷³

According to the measures specified, the Soviet POWs had to be subjected to a selection to separate—and execute—the politically dangerous elements from those who were harmless or who could become collaborators.

In these matters there also intervened the Inspectorate of Concentration Camps, in search of manpower for the "*Generalplan Ost*."

On 15 November 1941, *SS-Brigadeführer* Glücks sent a secret order to the concentration camps that read as follows:⁷⁵

"Reichsführer-SS and head of the German police has declared himself generally in agreement that the execution of Soviet POWs (particularly commissars) transferred into the concentration camps for execution, who, by virtue of their physical condition, may be employed for work in a stone quarry, may be waived. For this measure, it will be necessary to request the consent of the head of the Security Police and Security Service in advance.

In this regard, it hereby ordered:

Upon arrival at the camp of transports for execution, physically strong Russians capable of working in a stone quarry are to be selected by the head of the Protective Custody Camp (E)^[74] and the camp physician. A list of names of the selected Russians must be filed with this office, in duplicate. In this list, the camp physician must note that there are no medical objections to the employment in the work of the persons concerned. After the declaration of consent from the head of the Security Police and Security Service, by this office is ordered the transfer of the Russians concerned to a stone quarry."

["Der Reichsführer-SS und Chef der Deutschen Polizei hat sich grundsätzlich damit einverstanden erklärt, daß von den in die Konz. Lager zur Exekution überstellten russischen Kriegsgefangenen (insbesondere Kommissare), die auf Grund ihrer körperlichen Beschaffenheit zur Ar-

beit in einem Steinbruch eingesetzt werden können, die Exekution aufgeschoben wird. Zu dieser Maßnahme muß vorher das Einverständnis des Chefs der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD eingeholt werden.

Hierzu wird befohlen:

Beim Eintreffen von Exekutionstransporten in die Lager sind die körperlich kräftigen Russen, die sich für eine Arbeit in einem Steinbruch eignen, durch den Schutzhaftlagerführer (E) und dem Lagerarzt heraus zu suchen. Eine namentliche Liste der herausgesuchten Russen ist in Doppel ausgefertigt hier vorzulegen.

Auf dieser Liste muß der Lagerarzt vermerken, daß gegen den Arbeitsinsatz der Betreffenden ärztlicherseits keine Bedenken bestehen.

Nach Einverständniserklärung des Chefs der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD wird die Überstellung der Betreffenden Russen in ein Steinbruchlager von hier befohlen.”]

Two days later, on 17 November, Maximilian Grabner, head of the Auschwitz Political Section sent the following letter to the *Schutzhaftlagerführer* (E) of the camp (Karl Fritzsche):⁷⁷

“Based on the following order, a list of names of all Russians exempt from execution must be transmitted to this office. At the same time, please inform this office, by name, of all [Russians] to be considered for the following order, since the list of names must be transmitted to the Inspectorate of Concentration Camps and the head of the Security Service. In this regard, the consent of the camp physician is absolutely necessary.

The Russians indicated in the attached list^[76] and the Russian POWs selected last week by the Sonderkommando should be considered should be reviewed under the terms of the foregoing.”

[“Auf Grund des umstehenden Erlasses sind die von der Exekution ausgenommen Russen namentlich hierher zu melden. Gleichzeitig wird ersucht nach hier zu berichten welche zum unstehenden Befehl in Frage kommen, da diese listenmässig beim IKL und beim Chef der Sicherheitspolizei eingereicht werden müssen. In dieser Hinsicht das Einvernehmen mit dem hiesigen Lagerarzt unbedingt erforderlich. [sic]

In Frage kommen die auf der beiliegenden Liste aufgeführten Russen und die vom Sonderkommando in der vergangenen Woche zur Exekution ausgesuchten russ. Kriegsgefangene.”]

The *Sonderkommando* mentioned by Grabner was the commission presided over by Dr. Rudolf Mildner, head of the Gestapo at Kattowitz, who arrived at Auschwitz in November 1941 and who therefore had drawn up an

initial list of Soviet POWs to be executed as early as the beginning of the second ten-day period of the month. On the basis of his activity, reported in detail ex-Auschwitz inmate and ex-director of the local Museum Kazimierz Smoleńc:⁷⁸

It is therefore obvious that the first executions could not have taken place prior to 17 November. Precisely on the basis of these considerations, already discussed by myself at the beginning of the 1990s,⁷⁹ Pressac shifted the date of the “first gassing” at Auschwitz from September (the dating of the *Kalendarium* of Auschwitz) to December 1941.⁸⁰ For his part, Schulte, not knowing which date to choose, cites both. Nevertheless, the “first gassing” has no historical basis,⁸¹ nor do the “gas chambers” in Crematorium I.⁸²

But regardless of the above, Schulte’s explanation of the contradiction, as indicated above, seems unfounded, not only because the Soviet POWs were simply not slated for execution en masse at all, but also because even those sentenced to death—approximately 300 men, according to Smoleńc⁸³—were commuted if they were physically able to work, a fact strongly indicative of the priority given to the utilization of prisoner labor, including individual prisoners legally sentenced to death.

Background and Assessment of the Extermination Theory

The mass extermination of the Jews is thought to have developed at Auschwitz later, through a subsequent phase which is no less unsustainable: the gassing of the Jews unable to work who had worked in the labor camps of the Schmelt organization in Upper Silesia⁸⁴. The first transport of these inmates, according to the *Kalendarium* of Danuta Czech, should have arrived at the camp on 15 February 1942, but as Schulte correctly observes,

“The referenced situation of this transport is extremely unsatisfactory. The dating is based solely on a communication from the International Research Service,”

which appears in a note in Höss’s autobiography.⁸⁵ There is in fact no operational document attesting to the reality of this transport.

Schulte declares:⁸⁶

“At the beginning of May 1942, Auschwitz was included in the regional extermination actions which had addressed first the Jews of the Warthegau, then those of the district of Lublin at Lemberg,”

and now affected those of western Upper Silesia.

The reference is to the alleged extermination camps at Chełmno and Bełżec, which are said to have begun operation in December 1941 and March 1942.⁸⁷ He obviously does not realize that the creation of total extermination camps, in which able-bodied Jews were also exterminated, is in flagrant contradiction with the policies of Himmler and Pohl to acquire Jewish manpower for the “*Generalplan Ost*.” This contradiction is particularly evident for the Bełżec camp. On 17 March 1942, Fritz Reuters, a staffer in the *Abteilung Bevölkerungswesen und Fürsorge* (Department of Implementation and Support of Inhabitation) of the office of the Governor of the district of Lublin drew up a note in which he referred to a talk he had had the day before with *SS-Hauptsturmführer* Hermann Höfle. The latter had decided that unfit Jews would all have been sent to Bełżec; the camp would have been able to “receive 4-5 transports per day of 1,000 Jews,” said to have been deported “beyond the confines” and believed not to have returned to the *General Gouvernement*. The camp was in fact located on the old German-Soviet border, and was therefore defined as “an extreme station of confines of the circumscription of Zamość.” As regards able-bodied Jews, the note says:⁸⁹

“*SS-Hauptsturmführer Höfle is building a large camp in which able-bodied Jews may be registered with the card file system according to their professions, whence they may be requisitioned. Piaski will be liberated of Polish Jews and will become a collection point (Sammel-punkt) for Jews arriving from the Reich. [...] Höfle asks where, on the stretch Dęblin-Trawniki,^[88] may be unloaded 60,000 Jews.*”

Höfle was the acting *SS- und Polizeiführer* of the district of Lublin, therefore representing Globocnik, who was also the “head of construction of bases for the SS and Police in the Eastern territory,” thus he also operated within the framework of “*Generalplan Ost*.” The purpose of the camp for able-bodied Jews was probably that of supplying manpower for the *Durchgangstraße* IV in nearby Galicia.

As regards the alleged killing of the Jews of Upper Silesia, it should be noted that, in reality, there is no documentary trace of the 15 transports alleged to have arrived at Auschwitz from this region between 5 May and 18 August 1942, whose passengers are alleged to have been all gassed (35,130 persons), to say nothing of the alleged installation of the two gas-sing “*Bunkers*,” which as such never existed.⁹⁰

Schulte mentions the beginning of May as the starting point for the alleged “extermination actions,” because the *Kalendarium* of Auschwitz states that the first selection of sick inmates occurred on 4 May 1942; these

inmates are said to have been gassed in “Bunker 1.”⁹¹ Once again, there is no documentary evidence for this.

For Schulte, however, these selections were only episodic actions. The systematic actions were alleged in his opinion at the beginning of July 1942. This is how he sets forth his thesis:⁹²

“To be able to carry out the killing and the recruiting of forced workers at the same time, for future employment, the SS of the camp began to select the arriving transports into ‘able-bodied’ and ‘non-able bodied.’ As far as is known, the selection of an entire transport occurred on 4 July 1942: 372 Slovakian Jews were judged ‘able-bodied,’ and the remaining 628 were sent to the gas chambers.”

This assertion is taken from the *Kalendarium* of Auschwitz and is inferred from the simple observation that, starting on 4 July 1942,⁹³ the number of inmates registered from a transport is greatly less than the total number of deportees. There is no doubt that the registered inmates were generally able-bodied, but there is nothing to show that the non-able-bodied were gassed. As early as 13 August, SS-*Sturmbannführer* Rolf Günther sent the SS authorities at Paris a telegram bearing the object “Deportation of Jews to Auschwitz. Separation There of Jewish children” (“*Ab(t)ransport von Juden nach Auschwitz. Dort Abschiebung der Judenkinder*”).⁹⁴ The children were to be evacuated to the Eastern ghettos. I have also noted that Gisi Fleischmann, well-known Slovakian Zionist leader, in a letter dated 24 March 1943, remarked that some deportation reports mentioned the presence of Belgian Jews at Dęblin-Irena⁹⁵ and Końskowola, a village 6 km from Puławy, in the Lublin region, and that these Jews had arrived over the past few weeks; but all the transports of Jews arriving from Belgium by the end of March 1943 had been directed to Auschwitz,⁹⁶ therefore some of them had continued their trip on to the Lublin region. I will return to this question later.

What Schulte says right afterwards appears even more disputable:⁹⁷

“Since there was no concrete plan for the use of Jewish forced laborers in the ‘colonization of the East’ and not even the SS Economic and Administrative Office had given instructions for the creation of a manpower reserve, the decision on the death of the Jews deported to Auschwitz lay almost exclusively with the SS, which supervised the unloading platform at Birkenau, which as always, could feel themselves covered by Reichsführer-SS. As early as 17 and 18 July 1942, Himmler was present at the selection of deportees from a transport and the killing in the

gas chambers of persons classified as 'able-bodied'. In this way he sanctioned de facto the procedure introduced by the SS in the camp."

This is historically unfounded and contradictory.

As I have shown in another study, on 17 and 18 July 1942, two Jewish transports arrived at Auschwitz from the Dutch camp of Westerbork and one from Slovakia. Based on the camp *Stärkebuch*, the first transport arrived not earlier than 8:00 PM on the 16th and not later than 6:00 AM on the 17th; the other two arrived not before 8:00 PM on the 17th and not later than 6:00 AM on the 18th. According to Himmler's diary he landed at Katowitz airport at 3:15 PM on the 17th; therefore, he could not have seen the first transport of Dutch Jews, who were allegedly gassed before 6:00 AM. His visit to Auschwitz was concluded at 8:00 PM with a dinner at the officers' mess. After dinner, Himmler was accompanied to Kattowitz, where he was lodged for the night by *Gauleiter* Bracht. On the morning of the 18th, at 9:00 AM he was still in Bracht's house, and only got to Auschwitz after breakfast. For this reason, he could not even have seen the other two transports of Jews, which were allegedly/presumably gassed between 8:00 PM on the 17th and 6:00 AM on the 18th.⁹⁸ For this reason, Himmler could in no event have been present at a gassing of Jews.

On the other hand, Himmler's "sanction" implies a recognition and acceptance on his part of a state of fact, therefore he did not issue any general Jewish extermination order to Höss; vice-versa, if we accept Höss's account, according to which Himmler issued the extermination order in June 1941, Birkenau camp would necessarily have been planned and built in execution of this order and we would fall back into the interpretation of the Auschwitz Museum discussed at the beginning. Schulte has been criticized for precisely this, by Michael Thad Allen, who radicalizes the thesis of the Auschwitz Museum.⁹⁹ To the contrary, Schulte explicitly declares that

*"Himmler, Pohl and the SS planning experts had designed Auschwitz-Birkenau, not as an extermination camp, but as a labor camp for the colonization of the East,"*¹⁰⁰

explaining:

"At the beginning of June 1942, Himmler decided that 'non-able bodied' Western Jews should also be deported to Auschwitz in the future,"

obviously for purposes of extermination, because:

*"[...] Birkenau was utilised as an extermination camp for the European Jews only after July 1942."*¹⁰¹

For this reason, Himmler's alleged extermination order would have to date back to June 1942, contrary to Höss's statements, which are therefore revealed as unreliable in terms of historical-chronological development, together with the entire edifice of Holocaust historiography subsequently constructed on the basis of Höss's statements.

Schulte adds:¹⁰²

"On 19 July, the Reichsführer-SS ordered the killing of the entire Jewish population of the General Gouvernement with the exception of a few Jews to be gathered in labor camps."

But the document he mentions says only:

"I hereby order that the transfer of the entire Jewish population of the General Gouvernement be implemented and concluded by 31 December 1942" ["Ich ordne an, daß die Umsiedlung der gesamten jüdischen Bevölkerung des Generalgouvernements bis 31. Dezember 1942 durchgeführt und beendet ist."]

One further passage clarifies the meaning of this order:¹⁰³

"These measures are indispensable for the ethnic separation of races and populations required within the framework of the New European Order as well as in the interests of the security and cleanliness of the German Reich and of its spheres of interest." ["Diese Maßnahmen sind zu der im Sinne der Neuordnung Europas notwendigen ethnischen Scheidung von Rassen und Völker sowie im Interesse der Sicherheit und der Sauberkeit des deutschen Reiches und seiner Interessengebiete erforderlich."]

This is an unequivocal reference to the *"Generalplan Ost."*

Schulte concludes:¹⁰⁴

"In July 1942, the labor employment of Jewish inmates in colonization plans for the East by the SS Central Economic and Administrative Office was then relegated to second place."

But immediately afterwards, he falls into another contradiction:¹⁰⁵

"In truth, Himmler and Pohl were still planning, as always, to build a large forced labor camp at Auschwitz-Birkenau for the 'colonization of the East', but the homicidal actions took top priority, either because of the decisions of the Reichsführer-SS of mid-May 1942 or because of the SS de facto policies in the camp,"

so that

"To the labor employment no more than secondary importance was given. From July 1942, Auschwitz-Birkenau was used above all as a killing centre for the Jews of Western and South-Eastern Europe."

At this point, however, the problem arises of increasing the camp capacity to 200,000 inmates, which, as we have seen above, was ordered by Himmler as a result of his visit to Auschwitz on 17 and 18 July 1942 and confirmed in the 16 August plan for Birkenau. Schulte, however, instead of resolving this contradiction, restricts himself to take official note of it, writing:¹⁰⁶

"The extermination and reception facilities were both expanded, probably due to direct intervention by Himmler during his stay at Auschwitz."

Apart from the contradictory nature of this statement, the indisputable fact remains that the only documented decision made by Himmler is that relating to the expansion of the camp; therefore, the labor deployment was still a matter of priority concern. In the background there was no extermination.

On the other hand, Hitler issued the order to cease all "preparations and plans for future tasks of the peace" only on 13 January 1943.¹⁰⁷

The function of Birkenau camp, which continued regardless to be called a *Kriegsgefangenenlager*,¹⁰⁸ changed only in September 1942. During the month of October, the Building Plan (*Bauvorhaben*) "*Kriegsgefangenenlager Auschwitz*" was given the official designation of "*Durchführung der Sonderbehandlung*" (implementation of special treatment)¹⁰⁹. This change consisted of a vast program of construction projects to transform the camp into a source of manpower for the industries which had already arisen or were to arise in the territory around Auschwitz. A flow chart of the *Zentralbauleitung* drawn up by Bischoff in January 1943 mentioned in one sentence the "*Bauleitung des Kriegsgefangenenlager (Durchführung der Sonderbehandlung)*,"¹¹⁰ in another the "*Bauleitung Kriegsgefangenenlager Auschwitz (Durchführung der Sonderbaumaassnahmen)*,"¹¹¹ establishing a full equivalence between "implementation of special treatment" and "implementation of special construction measures."

As a result, a new plan was drawn up on 6 October 1942 in which the camp was divided into three sections: Section (*Lagerabschnitt*) 1, for 20,000 inmates, and Sections 2 and 3 for 60,000 inmates each, for a total capacity of 140,000 inmates.¹¹²

A letter from Kammler to the *Generalbevollmächtigte für die Regelung der Bauwirtschaft* (Chief of Coordination of the Construction Industry) dated 15 September 1942 bearing the subject "Special Construction Tasks

for KL Auschwitz» (*Sonderbauaufgaben für das K.L. Auschwitz*) informs us that the program was approved by Albert Speer, responsible for the Four-Year Plan and Chief of Coordination of the Construction Industry, and Pohl, head of the *SS-Wirtschafts-Verwaltungshauptamt*.¹¹⁴

“With reference to the talk between Herr Reichsminister Prof. Speer and SS-Obergruppenführer und General der Waffen-SS Pohl I will advise you in due course the additional volumes for the special program (Sonderprogramm) of KL Auschwitz as follows:

1.) List of the necessary additional Bauwerke with pertinent volumes for construction.

2.) List of necessary materials and barracks.

The work will be executed essentially by the inmates. A construction completion period of 50 weeks has been established for the entire Bauvorhaben. In addition to the inmates, an average of 350 skilled and common laborers will be required. This corresponds to 105,000^[113] working days.”

[“Unter Bezugnahme auf die Besprechung zwischen Herrn Reichsminister Prof. Speer und SS-Obergruppenführer und General der Waffen-SS Pohl teile ich nachstehend das zusätzliche Bau-Volumen für das Sonderprogramm des K.L. Auschwitz wie folgt mit:

1.) Zusammenstellung der erforderlichen zusätzlichen Bauwerke mit zugehörigem Bauvolumen.

2.) Zusammenstellung der erforderlichen Baustoffe und Baracken.

Die Arbeiten werden im Wesentlichen durch Häftlinge ausgeführt. Als Bauzeit für das gesamte Bauvorhaben werden 50 Arbeitswochen angesetzt. Ausser den Häftlingen werden im Durchschnitt 350 Fach- und Hilfsarbeiter benötigt. Dies ergibt 105.000 Tagewerke.”]

Redeployment to Armaments Industry

This program formed part of a larger project which had been discussed by Speer and Pohl concurrently on 15 September 1942. The day afterwards, Pohl drew up a detailed report on it for Himmler. The discussion was organized in four points, the first of which was the “Expansion of the Auschwitz Barracks Camp in Consequence of the Migration to the East” (*Vergrößerung Barackenlager Auschwitz infolge Ostwanderung*). On this point, Pohl declared:

“Reichsminister Prof. Speer has authorised the expansion on a vast scale of Auschwitz camp and has allocated additional budget to the Auschwitz construction projects of 13,700,000 Reichsmark. This budget includes the installation of approximately 300 barracks, with the relat-

ed service and auxiliary plants. The materials required will be assigned in the fourth quarter of 1942 and in the first, second and third quarters of 1943. When this supplementary program of construction projects is completed, at Auschwitz we will be able to house a total of 132,000 persons." ["Reichsminister Prof. Speer hat die Vergrößerung des Barackenlagers Auschwitz im vollen Umfang genehmigt und ein zusätzliches Bauvolumen für Auschwitz in Höhe von 13,7 Millionen Reichsmark bereitgestellt. Dieses Bauvolumen umfasst die Aufstellung von rd. 300 Baracken mit den erforderlichen Versorgungs- und Ergänzungsanlagen. Die notwendigen Rohstoffe werden im 4. Quartal 1942 sowie im 1., 2. und 3. Quartal 1943 zugeteilt. Wenn dieses zusätzliche Bauprogramm durchgeführt ist, können in Auschwitz insgesamt 132.000 Mann untergebracht werden."]

Pohl then noted that

"All participants agreed that all existing concentration camp manpower was to be employed in large-scale armaments tasks" ["Alle Beteiligten waren sich einig, dass die in den Konzentrationslagern vorhandene Arbeitskraft nunmehr für Rüstungsaufgaben von Grossformat eingesetzt werden müssen."]

After stressing the need to release German and foreign civilian workmen from the armaments plants whose staff was not complete (to fill the gaps existing in other similar plants) and to replace them with concentration camp inmates, Pohl continues:¹¹⁵

"Reichsminister Prof. Speer wishes to arrange in this way the rapid deployment to start with of 50,000 able-bodied Jews currently barred from their trades, for whom housing is available.

The manpower required for this purpose will be diverted above all at Auschwitz from the migration to the East (Ostwanderung), so that our existing business installations are not disturbed in their production and construction by continual staff turnover.

The able-bodied Jews intended for migration to the East will therefore interrupt their trip and must provide labor in the field of armaments."

["Reichsminister Prof. Speer will auf diese Weise kurzfristig den Einsatz von zunächst 50.000 arbeitsfähigen Juden in geschlossenen vorhandenen Betrieben mit vorhandenen Unterbringungsmöglichkeiten gewährleisten.

Die für diesen Zweck notwendigen Arbeitskräfte werden wir in erster Linie in Auschwitz aus der Ostwanderung abschöpfen, damit unsere bestehenden betrieblichen Einrichtungen durch einen dauernden Wechsel

der Arbeitskräfte in ihrer Leistung und ihrem Aufbau nicht gestört werden.

Die für die Ostwanderung bestimmten arbeitsfähigen Juden werden also ihre Reise unterbrechen und Rüstungsarbeiten leisten müssen.”]

In practice, Auschwitz was to function as a transit camp for the Jews deported within the framework of the *Ostwanderung* (deportation to the East): the able-bodied ones stayed at the camp, the non-able bodied, including children, continued their trip to the East.

The rationale for this change of function of the camp was explained very clearly by Höss in a speech given at Auschwitz on 22 May 1943 in the presence of Kammler and other officials, in which he outlined the origins and development of the institutional tasks of the camp:¹¹⁶

“Between the Vistula and the Sola, in the triangle formed by their confluence, Auschwitz Camp emerged in 1940, after the evacuation of seven Polish villages, thanks to the expansion of the area of an artillery unit and several adjacent construction projects, both restored and new, using rather large quantities of materials originating from the demolitions. Originally planned as a quarantine camp, this then became a camp of the Reich and received in consequence a new purpose (Zweckbestimmung). Its location between the Reich and the General Gouv ernement, due to the continual worsening of the situation, is particularly favorable, because it was guaranteed to fill the camp with manpower. To this was added quite recently the solution of the Jewish problem (die Lösung der Judenfrage), for which it has been necessary to create the facilities to house initially 60,000 inmates, which will very quickly increase to 100,000. The inhabitants of the camp are primarily intended for the large industry which is developing in the vicinity. The camp includes within its zone of interest various armaments factories, for which it is necessary to make manpower [available].”

Therefore the “Solution of the Jewish Problem” at Auschwitz referred simply to measures for the construction of housing for 100,000 inmates.

Development of Medical Complex

At the beginning of May 1943 the green light was given for a vast program of “Special Measures for the Improvement of Hygienic Installations” (*Sondermassnahmen für die Verbesserung der hygienischen Einrichtungen*) of Birkenau camp, which, in the documents, is called interchangeably “Sofortprogramm” (Immediate Program), “Sondermassnahme,” (Special

Measure), “Sonderprogramm” (Special Program), “Sonderbaumaassnahmen” (Special Construction Measures) and “Sonderaktion” (Special Action).¹¹⁷ The related written order was transmitted by Kammler to the commandant of Auschwitz on 14 May.¹¹⁸ From its inception, this program for the improvement of the hygienic installations of Birkenau camp also included the crematoria.¹¹⁹ The related documents set forth the idea of installing “showers in the undressing room of Crematorium III” (*Brausen im Auskleideraum des Krematoriums III*),¹²⁰ which constituted a “plan for [the] production of hot water for approximately 100 showers” (*Projekt für Warmwasserbereitung für ca. 100 Brausen*).¹²¹ A report dated 16 May states explicitly:¹²²

“There are also plans to install heating coils in the waste incinerator of Crematorium III to generate the [hot] water required for a shower installation, to be built in the semi-underground area of Crematorium III.” [“Weiters ist geplant, im Krematorium III in dem Müllverbrennungsofen Heizschlangen einzubauen, um durch diese das Wasser für eine im Keller des Krematoriums III zu errichtende Brauseanlage zu gewinnen.”]

The extension of the plan to Crematorium II is confirmed by a questionnaire (*Fragebogen*) on the Birkenau crematoria, undated, drawn up by Bischoff in June 1943, in which it is stated that it was planned to use the discharge gases from the chimneys “for bathing installations in Crematoria II and III” (*für Badeanlagen im Crema. II u. III*).¹²³

The plan to install 100 showers in Crematorium III (and in another similar installation of Crematorium II) was intended for all the inmates of the camp, as deduced from the fact that at that time, the *Zentralsauna*, the disinfection and disinfestation facility for the entire camp, was equipped with only 54 showers. For various reasons the plan was revised and only 14 showers were installed in Crematorium III.¹²⁴

Overall, the morgues of the Birkenau crematoria were always required for use as such, from morning to night, something which would have been impossible if they had been transformed into “undressing rooms” and “gas chambers” for the extermination of the Jews.¹²⁵

As early as 20 March 1943, *SS-Standortarzt* (garrison physician), *SS-Hauptsturmführer* Eduard Wirths, made the following request with the camp commandant:¹²⁶

“For the transport of the bodies from the inmate hospital to the crematorium two covered hand trolleys must be procured permitting the transport of 50 bodies each.” [“Für den Abtransport der Leichen aus

dem HKB zum Krematorium müssen 2 gedeckte Handwagen beschaffen werden, die den Transport von je 50 Leichen gestatten.”]

And again on 25 May 1944 (at the height of the deportation and alleged mass killing of the Hungarian Jews), Dr. Wirths wrote:¹²⁷

“In the inmate infirmary of the camps at KL Auschwitz II every day there are naturally a certain number of cadavers, whose transport to the crematorium is regularly scheduled and occurs twice a day, morning and evening.” [“In den Häftlingsrevieren der Lager des KL Auschwitz II fallen naturgemäß täglich eine bestimmte Anzahl von Leichen an, deren Abtransport zu den Krematorien zwar eingeteilt ist und täglich 2 mal, morgens und abends, erfolgt.”]

At the time, however, according to Holocaust historiography, the morgues of the crematoria were crammed full of Hungarian Jews intended for extermination, which is in obvious conflict with the above-mentioned letter.

Within the framework of the “Special Measures for the Improvement of the Hygienic Facilities” mentioned above, on 17 May 1943, Kammler ordered the transformation of *Bauabschnitt III* (construction section III) of Birkenau camp into an inmate hospital.

The planning was assigned to Amt C of the *SS-Wirtschafts-Verwaltungshauptamt*, and specifically to *SS-Sturmbannführer* Wirtz, head of the *Amt C/III-Technische Fachgebiete* (Office C/III-Technological-Specialist Sectors) and to *SS-Untersturmführer* Birkigt, head of *Hauptabteilung C/II/3-Lazarette und Reviere* (Main Section C/II/3 – Infirmaries and hospitals).

On 4 June, Wirtz and Birkigt designed plan no. 2521 “*K.L. Auschwitz—Bauabschnitt III. Häftlings-Lazarett u. Quarantäne-Abt.*” (Auschwitz Concentration Camp—Construction Sector III. Inmate Hospital and Quarantine Section) in which this sector is subdivided into two quarantine camps, one for men and one for women, for 4,088 persons each, and two hospital camps (*Krankenfeld*), one for men and one for women, for 3,188 persons each. The two hospital camps provided 2 barracks for “surgery” (*Chirurgie*), 2 barracks for “X rays and treatment” (*Röntgen und Behandlung*), 2 barracks for “pharmacy” (*Apotheke*), 4 “barracks for post-operative patients” (*Baracke für frisch Operierte*) and 4 “barracks for the seriously ill” (*Baracke für Schwerkranke*).¹²⁸

The plan of *Zentralbauleitung* 2637—undated, but no doubt drawn up in June 1943—depicts the planimetry of the male patient section of “*Häftlingsrevier im Bauabschnitt ‘3’ des K.G.L.*” (Hospital for inmates in the construction section ‘3’ of the POW camp). This shows in detail the bar-

racks for post-operative inmates (frisch Operierte), denominated 6a and for those with severe internal (*schwere Innere*) conditions, indicated as 6b.¹²⁹

An “*Aufstellung über die zur Durchführung der Sondermassnahme im K.G.L. notwendigen Baracken*” (List of Barracks Necessary for the Implementation of the Special Measure) dated 11 June 1943 mentions overall 183 barracks for the “*Bauabschnitt III (Häftlingslazarett)*,” plus 2 for the “*Truppenlazarett*” (infirmary for the troops), including:¹³⁰

- 4 special barracks (*Spezialbaracke[n]*) for ‘post-operative patients’ (*frisch Operierte*)
- 4 special barracks for ‘seriously ill’ (*schwere Innere*)
- 2 special barracks for ‘X rays and treatment’ (*Röntgen und Behandlung*)
- 2 special surgical (*chirurgische*) barracks
- 111 barracks for ordinary ill patients (*Baracken für Normalkranken*)

The construction work began at the end of June. On 13 July, 26 barracks were already built, in addition to the excavation of the circular drainage ditches (*Ringgräben*) and a provisional water treatment plant (*provisorisches Vorklärbecken*).¹³¹

Another 6 barracks were built on 31 July, in addition to the excavation of two circular drainage ditches and the fence installation work had begun.¹³²

The “Explanatory Report on the Expansion of the Waffen-SS POW Camp at Auschwitz, Upper Silesia” drawn up by Bischoff on 30 September 1943, for construction sector III of the camp mentions among other things:¹³³

“*BW 3e 114 convalescent barracks (Krankenbaracken) Type 501/34 [43 by 13 meters]*

BW 6c 4 disinfection barracks (Entwesungsbaracken) Type VII/5 [33 by 8 meters]

BW 7c 11 infirmary barracks (Pflegerbaracken) (Schweizerbaracken)

BW 12b 12 barracks for the seriously ill (Baracken f. Schwerkranke) type 501/34”

On 25 September, masonry work was underway in barracks 68, 70, 71, 74, 89, 91, 92 e 93 and carpentry work in barracks 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 94, 128 and 146.¹³⁴

On 1 October 1943, *SS-Obersturmführer* Werner Jothann, having just taken over for Bischoff as head of the *Zentralbauleitung*,¹³⁵ drew up a “Cost Estimate on the Expansion of the Waffen-SS POW Camp at Auschwitz,” in which, for every *Bauwerk* already constructed or planned the cost estimate was calculated. For the sector of construction projects III (*Bauab-*

schnitt III), denominated “*Häftlingslazarett*” (inmate hospital), the following structures, among other things, were added: 114 barracks for sick patients (at a cost of 4,542,216 *Reichsmark*), the 4 disinfection barracks (80,940 RM), 11 infirmary barracks (103,488 RM) and the 12 barracks for the seriously ill (515,625), mentioned above:¹³⁶

In the report of 30 October, Jothann stated that by that time 47 barracks had been built, in which finishing work was underway.¹³⁷

The subsequent reports, until the end of November, mention the progress of the barracks assembly work and related work for construction of the “inmate hospital” in *Bauabschnitt III*.

On 24 February 1944, Jothann transmitted the request for metal of the Knauth firm (supplier of barracks) to the *Bauinspektion der Waffen-SS und Polizei “Schlesien”* (Waffen-SS and “Silesia” Construction Inspection Projects), explaining that the plan of the camp hospital provided for the overall construction of 180 barracks.¹³⁸ 700 inmates were already working in *Bauabschnitt III* as of 31 March 1944.¹³⁹

In 1944, the *Zentralbauleitung* defined all the bureaucratic practices relating to the camp hospital.

On 25 May, Jothann drew up an “Explanatory Report on the Expansion of the Waffen-SS POW Camp at Auschwitz, Upper Silesia. Construction of 111 barracks for ill patients” (*Erläuterungsbericht zum Ausbau des Kriegsgefangenenlagers der Waffen-SS in Auschwitz O/S. Errichtung von 111 Krankenbaracken*), in which we read:¹⁴²

“The work started on March 15, 1943.^[140] 37^[141] barracks have been erected and are partly internally fitted out” [“Mit den Arbeiten wurde am 15.3.1943 begonnen. 37 Baracken sind fertiggestellt und zum Teil innen ausgebaut”]

On 10 August 1944, the head of Amt C/V (*Zentralbauinspektion*) of the *SS-Wirtschafts-Verwaltungshauptamt*, who had received the above-mentioned documentation on 26 June, issued the construction order relating, respectively, according to bureaucratic procedure, to the following:

“Based on the documents filed I hereby issue construction order for 111 barracks for ill patients in the POW camp, camp II, Auschwitz, construction sector III, Bauwerke 3e and 3fQ” [“Aufgrund der eingereichten Unterlagen erteile ich hiermit den Befehl zur Errichtung von 111 Krankenbaracken im Kgf.L., Lager II, Auschwitz, BA III, BW 3e und 3f.”]

The construction request (*Bauantrag*) for the “12 barracks for seriously ill patients” (*Baracken für Schwerkranke*) was sent by Jothann to the

Bauinspektion der Waffen-SS und Polizei "Schlesien" on 12 August 1944.¹⁴³ On 31 October, Amt C/V of the *SS-Wirtschaftsverwaltungshauptamt* issued the related retrospective construction order.¹⁴⁴

The construction request for the 11 barracks for infirmaries making up Bauwerk 7e (*Bauantrag zur Errichtung von 11 Stück Pflegerbaracken im BA.III – BW 7e*), was issued by Bischoff on 9 October 1944.¹⁴⁵

On 31 May 1944, in the *Bauabschnitt III* there were 63 barracks.¹⁴⁶ The deportation of the Hungarian Jews caught the *Zentralbauleitung* unprepared and upset the projects relating to the hospital camp.

At the beginning of June, *Bauabschnitt III*, although it was still uninhabitable, was transformed (together with part of camp BIIc and part of BIIa and camp BIIe) into "*Durchgangslager*" (transit camps) for able-bodied unregistered Jews intended for transfer to other camps. On 2 June, Kammler ordered Jothann to make 14 barracks of the *Bauabschnitt III* available to house these Jews.¹⁴⁷ The first Jewish transport was sent there on 9 June. On 16 June, there were already 7,000 Jews there.¹⁴⁸ No fewer than 98,600 Jews passed through the Birkenau transit camp.¹⁴⁹

As I have explained elsewhere,¹⁵⁰ the *Zentralbauleitung* was caught completely by surprise by the enormous influx of Hungarian Jews and did not succeed in preparing any decent housing for a large proportion of these future forced laborers of the Reich.

The plan of the hospital camp in *Bauabschnitt III* of Birkenau was definitively abandoned on 23 September 1944, as a result of Jothann's letter to the *Bauinspektion der Waffen-SS und Polizei "Schlesien"* with the subject "Construction of 12 barracks for the seriously ill in construction sector III-BW 12b" (*Errichtung von 12 Baracken für Schwerkranke im BA.III-BW 12b*) dated 6 December 1944.¹⁵¹

"At the instance of the discussion of the head of the Central Office [Pohl] on 23 September 1944 in Auschwitz, orders were issued to cease construction work in construction sector III of the POW camp and commence the demolition of the 12 barracks for the seriously ill" ["Anlässlich der Besprechung des Hauptamtschefs am 23.9.44 in Auschwitz, wurde die Einstellung der Bauarbeiten im BA.III des K.G.L. befohlen, und mit Abbruch der 12 Baracken für Schwerkranke begonnen."]

Since this hospital camp was planned and partially finished, the argument set forth by Pressac remains fully valid:¹⁵³

"There is an incongruity in the creation of a sanitary camp a few hundred meters from the four crematoria, where, according to the official historiography, persons were exterminated on a vast scale. [...] The

plan to construct a large hospital section in the BAIII thus shows that the crematoria were constructed solely for cremation, without homicidal gas chambers,^[152] since the SS wished to ‘conserve’ the labor force from their concentration camp.”

Conclusion

To sum up, Birkenau camp was created as a *Kriegsgefangenenlager* in October 1941 as a feature of the “*Generalplan Ost*.”

From September 1942, Birkenau became the selection center for Jewish manpower for German industries, either already in existence or in the planning stage, within the territory of Auschwitz, while simultaneously serving as a transit camp for non-able-bodied Jews deported within the framework of the *Ostwanderung*.

Starting in May 1943, this function was accentuated as the result of a vast program of “special measures for the improvement of the hygienic installations” and plans for an enormous hospital camp to conserve and treat Jews engaged in forced labor.

In May 1944, Birkenau also became a “transit camp” for the distribution of Jewish manpower into other concentration camps.

The alleged extermination of the Jews is refuted by these new historical findings.

Notes

Abbreviations used in the Notes

AGK: *Archiwum Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej* (Archive of the Central Commission of Inquiry into Crimes against the Jewish People – National Memorial), Warsaw

APMM: *Archiwum Państwowego Muzeum na Majdanku* (Archive of Majdanek State)

APMO: *Archiwum Państwowego Muzeum w Oświęcimiu* (Archive of the Auschwitz State Museum)

BAK: *Bundesarchiv Koblenz* (Federal Archive Koblenz), Koblenz

GARF: *Gosudarstvenni Archiv Rossiskoi Federatsii* (State Archive of the Russian Federation), Moscow

RGVA: *Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennii Vojennii Archiv* (Russian State War Archive), Moscow

VHA: *Vojensky Historicky Archiv* (Military Historical Archive), Prague

WAPL: *Wojewódzkie Archiwum Państwowe w Lublinie* (Provincial State Archive of Lublin).

- ¹ D. Dwork, R. J. van Pelt, *Auschwitz 1270 to the Present*. W.W. Norton & Company. New York-London, 1996, p. 254.
- ² R. J. van Pelt, "A Site in Search of a Mission," in: Yisrael Gutman and Michael Berenbaum (authors), *Anatomy of the Auschwitz Death Camp*. Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1994, pp. 93-114.
- ³ J.E. Schulte, "Vom Arbeits- zum Vernichtungslager. Die Entstehungsgeschichte von Auschwitz-Birkenau 1941/42" in: *Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, 1, 2002, pp. 41-69.
- ⁴ *Death Dealer: The Memoirs of the SS Kommandant at Auschwitz*. Da Capo, New York, 1996, p. 124. German text: *Kommandant in Auschwitz. Autobiographische Aufzeichnungen des Rudolf Höss*. Edited by Martin Broszat. Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, Munich, 1981, pp. 98-99.
- ⁵ J.E. Schulte, "Vom Arbeits- zum Vernichtungslager. Die Entstehungsgeschichte von Auschwitz-Birkenau 1941/42," *op. cit.*, p. 41.
- ⁶ GARF, 7021-108-32, p. 28.
- ⁷ F. Piper, "Die Entstehungsgeschichte des KL Auschwitz," in: Waclaw Długoborski, Franciszek Piper (authors), *Auschwitz 1940-1945. Studien zur Geschichte des Konzentrations- und Vernichtungslagers Auschwitz*. Verlag des Staatlichen Museums Auschwitz-Birkenau. Oświęcim, 1999, vol. I, p. 68.
- ⁸ F. Piper, "Die Vernichtungsmethoden," in: *Auschwitz 1940-1945. Studien zur Geschichte des Konzentrations- und Vernichtungslagers Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, vol. III, p. 170.
- ⁹ The complete name was "Sonderbauleitung für die Errichtung eines Kriegsgefangenenlagers der Waffen-SS in Auschwitz O.S.," "Special administration for the construction of a Waffen-SS POW camp at Auschwitz, Upper Silesia."
- ¹⁰ J. Sehn, "Obóz koncentracyjny i zagłady Oświęcim" ("Auschwitz Concentration and Extermination Camp"), in: *Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Niemieckich w Polsce*. Poznań, 1946, p. 70.
- ¹¹ F. Piper, "Die Vernichtungsmethoden," in: *Auschwitz 1940-1945. Studien zur Geschichte des Konzentrations- und Vernichtungslagers Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, vol. III, p. 171.
- ¹² RGVA, 502-1-314, pp. 8-8a.
- ¹³ F. Piper, "Die Vernichtungsmethoden," in: *Auschwitz 1940-1945. Studien zur Geschichte des Konzentrations- und Vernichtungslagers Auschwitz*, *op. cit.*, vol. III, p. 172.
- ¹⁴ Originally, the crematorium was to have been built in Auschwitz camp, beside the old crematorium. When the location was shifted to Birkenau, the underground morgues were to be raised due to the high water table and became semi-underground. This implied the redesign of the initial plans, dating back to October-November 1941.
- ¹⁵ Drawing 936 dated 15 January 1941, in: J.-C. Pressac, *Auschwitz: Technique and operation of the gas chambers*. The Beate Klarsfeld Foundation, New York, 1989, pp. 268-269.
- ¹⁶ RGVA, 502-1-233, p. 24.
- ¹⁷ J.E. Schulte, "Vom Arbeits- zum Vernichtungslager. Die Entstehungsgeschichte von Auschwitz-Birkenau 1941/42," *op. cit.*, p. 42.
- ¹⁸ PS-660, p. 16.

- ¹⁹ Underlined in the original.
- ²⁰ PS-660, p. 18.
- ²¹ The *Wasserpölen* (literally, “Water Poles”), also known as Lechs (*Lechen*), lived in Upper Silesia.
- ²² PS-660, pp. 24-25.
- ²³ In consequence of the anticipated transfer of 6,636,000 Poles resident in the Polish territories annexed by Germany.
- ²⁴ PS-660, p. 25.
- ²⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 35-36.
- ²⁶ To carry out this order, which had already been issued by Hitler by decree of 7 October 1939, Himmler instituted an “RKF Office” (*Dienststelle RKF [Reichskommissar für die Festigung deutschen Volkstums]*) directed by SS-Oberführer Ulrich Greifelt, which in June 1941 was transformed into the *RKF-Stabshauptamt* (Central RKF Command Office).
- ²⁷ NO-3031.
- ²⁸ J.E. Schulte, “Vom Arbeits- zum Vernichtungslager. Die Entstehungsgeschichte von Auschwitz-Birkenau 1941/42,” *op. cit.*, p. 44.
- ²⁹ NO-385.
- ³⁰ J.E. Schulte, “Vom Arbeits- zum Vernichtungslager. Die Entstehungsgeschichte von Auschwitz-Birkenau 1941/42,” *op. cit.*, p. 48.
- ³¹ See, in this regard, J. Graf, C. Mattogno, *Concentration camp Majdanek. A Historical and Technical Study*. Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago, 2003, pp. 20-24 and document 2 on p. 256.
- ³² APMM, *Zentralbauleitung*, 120, p. 8.
- ³³ APMM, 120, p. 11.
- ³⁴ Letter from the head of the *Zentralbauleitung* of Lublin to Globocnik dated 27 January 1942. WAPL, 168, p. 3. *Erläuterungsbericht mit Kostenaufstellung über den Bau eines Durchgangsnachschublagers für den Höheren SS- und Polizeiführer Rußland Süd in Lublin*. WAPL, 168, pp. 10-11.
- ³⁵ *Übergabe-Verhandlung dello Hauptnachschublager* (main resupply camp). WAPL, 168, p. 23.
- ³⁶ WAPL, 54, p. 13.
- ³⁷ *Erläuterungsbericht zum Vorentwurf für den Neubau des Kriegsgefangenenlagers der Waffen-SS, Auschwitz O/S. und Kostenvoranschlag für den Vorentwurf den Neubau des Kriegsgefangenenlagers der Waffen-SS Auschwitz O.S.* RGVA, 502-1-233, p. 14, 15 and 22.
- ³⁸ RGVA, 502-1-233, p. 11.
- ³⁹ Plans published by J.-C. Pressac in *Auschwitz: Technique and operation of the gas chambers*, *op. cit.*, pp. 185-186.
- ⁴⁰ *ibid.*, p. 189.
- ⁴¹ *ibid.*, p. 195.
- ⁴² *ibid.*, p. 203.
- ⁴³ The Auschwitz *Bauleitung* was renamed *Zentralbauleitung* on 14 November 1941. [*Zentral-Bauleitung* was a promotion]
- ⁴⁴ GARF, 7021-108-32, p. 32
- ⁴⁵ *Bauwerk*, abbreviated as BW, worksite or building site or set of construction projects of the same type.

- ⁴⁶ *Bevollmächtigte für den Holzbau.*
- ⁴⁷ GARF, 7021-108-32, pp. 34-35.
- ⁴⁸ J. Graf, C. Mattogno, *Concentration camp Majdanek. A Historical and Technical Study*, *op. cit.*, document 3 on p. 257.
- ⁴⁹ GARF, 7021-108-32, p. 37.
- ⁵⁰ GARF, 7021-108-32, p. 41.
- ⁵¹ Facsimile of the document in: *Stutthof. Das Konzentrationslager*. Wydawnictwo "Marpress." Gdańsk, 1996, unnumbered pages.
- ⁵² J.E. Schulte, "Vom Arbeits- zum Vernichtungslager. Die Entstehungsgeschichte von Auschwitz-Birkenau 1941/42," *op. cit.*, p. 53.
- ⁵³ Jerzy Brandhuber, "Die sowjetischen Kriegsgefangenen im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz," in: *Hefte von Auschwitz*. Wydawnictwo Państwowego Muzeum w Oświęcimiu, 4, 1961, pp. 32-35.
- ⁵⁴ J.E. Schulte, "Vom Arbeits- zum Vernichtungslager. Die Entstehungsgeschichte von Auschwitz-Birkenau 1941/42," *op. cit.*, p. 56.
- ⁵⁵ *Durchgangstraße IV*, or *Dg IV*, was to run from Galicia to the Western Ukraine.
- ⁵⁶ J.E. Schulte, "Vom Arbeits- zum Vernichtungslager. Die Entstehungsgeschichte von Auschwitz-Birkenau 1941/42," *op. cit.*, p. 59.
- ⁵⁷ *ibid.*, pp. 57-58.
- ⁵⁸ Literally: "road building."
- ⁵⁹ NG-2586-G, p. 8 of the original.
- ⁶⁰ G. Aly, "Endlösung." *Völkerverschiebung und der Mord an den europäischen Juden*. S. Fischer Verlag, Frankfurt am Main, 1995, pp. 275-276.
- ⁶¹ PS-1029.
- ⁶² *ibid.*, p. 59. NO-500.
- ⁶³ *ibid.*, p. 60.
- ⁶⁴ T-1078.
- ⁶⁵ RF-1216.
- ⁶⁶ D. Czech, *Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz-Birkenau 1939-1945*. Rowohlt Verlag, Reinbek bei Hamburg, 1989, dates indicated.
- ⁶⁷ J.E. Schulte, "Vom Arbeits- zum Vernichtungslager. Die Entstehungsgeschichte von Auschwitz-Birkenau 1941/42," *op. cit.*, pp. 65-66.
- ⁶⁸ *ibid.*, p. 67.
- ⁶⁹ *ibid.*, p. 66.
- ⁷⁰ *ibid.*, p. 65.
- ⁷¹ *ibid.*, p. 64, note 120.
- ⁷² Text in: Hans Buchheim, Martin Broszat, Hans-Adolf Jacobsen, Helmut Krausnik, *Anatomie des SS-Staates*. Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, Munich, 1982, vol. 2, pp. 218-220.
- ⁷³ PS-502.
- ⁷⁴ *Erziehungshäftlinge*, inmates in protective custody for re-education purposes.
- ⁷⁵ GARF, 7021-108-47, p. 5.
- ⁷⁶ This document has not been found.
- ⁷⁷ GARF, 7021-108-47, p. 5a.

- ⁷⁸ Sworn declaration by K. Smoleń, Cracow, 15 December 1947. NO-5849. See also D. Czech, *Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz-Birkenau 1939-1945*, *op. cit.*, p. 137.
- ⁷⁹ *Auschwitz: la prima gasation*. Editions di Ar, Padua, 1992, p. 159. Supplemented American edition: *Auschwitz: The First Gassing. Rumor and Reality*. Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago, 2005.
- ⁸⁰ *Les crématoires d'Auschwitz. La machinerie du meurtre de masse*. CNRS Editions, Parigi, 1993, p. 34. Italian translation: *Le macchine dello sterminio. Auschwitz 1941-1945*. Feltrinelli, Milan, 1994, p. 44.
- ⁸¹ C. Mattogno, *Auschwitz: the First Gassing. Rumor and Reality*, *op. cit.*
- ⁸² See my study *Auschwitz: Crematorium I and the Alleged Homicidal Gassings*. Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago, 2005.
- ⁸³ Sworn declaration by K. Smoleń, Cracow, 15 December 1947. NO-5849.
- ⁸⁴ J.E. Schulte, "Vom Arbeits- zum Vernichtungslager. Die Entstehungsgeschichte von Auschwitz-Birkenau 1941/42," *op. cit.*, p. 64.
- ⁸⁵ *ibid.*, p. 64, note 120.
- ⁸⁶ *ibid.*, p. 65.
- ⁸⁷ See, in this regard, my study *Belżec in Propaganda, Testimonies, Archeological Research, and History*. Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago 2004 ; *Belżec nella propaganda, nelle testimonianze, nelle indagini archeologiche e nella storia*. Effepi, Genoa, 2006 and *Il campo di Chelmno tra storia e propaganda*, soon to be published Effepi, Genova, 2009
- ⁸⁸ Dęblin is located approximately 76 km north-west of Lublin (in the direction of Warsaw), Trawniki approximately 35 km east of Lublin and approximately 13 km east of Piaski.
- ⁸⁹ *Faschismus-Getto-Massenmord. Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges*. Röderberg-Verlag, Frankfurt am Main, 1960, pp. 269-270. Cfr. *Belżec in Propaganda, Testimonies, Archeological Research, and History* *Belżec nella propaganda, nelle testimonianze, nelle indagini archeologiche e nella storia*, *op. cit.*, pp. 32-33.103-104.
- ⁹⁰ In this regard, see my study *The Bunkers of Auschwitz. Black Propaganda versus History*. Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago, 2004.
- ⁹¹ E. Schulte, "Vom Arbeits- zum Vernichtungslager. Die Entstehungsgeschichte von Auschwitz-Birkenau 1941/42," *op. cit.*, p. 64.
- ⁹² *ibid.*, p. 67.
- ⁹³ Starting on 5 August for the Jewish transports from France.
- ⁹⁴ See my study *Sonderbehandlung" ad Auschwitz. Genesi e significato*. Editions di Ar, Padua, 2001, pp. 33-43.
- ⁹⁵ Irena is a suburb of Dęblin.
- ⁹⁶ Serge Klarsfeld and Maxime Steinberg, *Mémorial de la déportation des juifs de Belgique*. The Beate Klarsfeld Foundation, New York, 1994, pp. 42-45.
- ⁹⁷ E. Schulte, "Vom Arbeits- zum Vernichtungslager. Die Entstehungsgeschichte von Auschwitz-Birkenau 1941/42," *op. cit.*, p. 67.
- ⁹⁸ In this regard, see my study *Sonderbehandlung" ad Auschwitz. Genesi e significato*, *op. cit.*, "La visita di Himmler ad Auschwitz," pp. 18-29 *Special Treat-*

- ment in Auschwitz. Origin and Meaning of a Term.* Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago 2004, pp. 17-25 and related sources.
- ⁹⁹ M.T. Allen, "Anfänge der Menschenvernichtung in Auschwitz, Oktober 1941. Eine Erwiderung auf Jan Erik Schulte," in: *Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, 4/2003, pp. 565-572.
- ¹⁰⁰ E. Schulte, "Vom Arbeits- zum Vernichtungslager. Die Entstehungsgeschichte von Auschwitz-Birkenau 1941/42," *op. cit.*, p. 69.
- ¹⁰¹ *ibid.*
- ¹⁰² *ibid.*, p. 68.
- ¹⁰³ *Faschismus – Getto – Massenmord.* Röderberg-Verlag, Frankfurt am Main, 1960, p. 303.
- ¹⁰⁴ E. Schulte, "Vom Arbeits- zum Vernichtungslager. Die Entstehungsgeschichte von Auschwitz-Birkenau 1941/42," *op. cit.*, p. 68.
- ¹⁰⁵ *ibid.*
- ¹⁰⁶ *ibid.*, p. 68, note 144.
- ¹⁰⁷ "Der Generalplan Ost," in: *Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, 1958, 3, p. 292.
- ¹⁰⁸ This designation remained in effect until 31 March 1944, when the camp was called "*Lager II Birkenau*." Note for Kirschneck files dated 31 March 1944. AGK, NTN, 94, p. 60.
- ¹⁰⁹ *Vorhaben: Kriegsgefangenenlager Auschwitz (Durchführung der Sonderbehandlung).* VHA, OT31(2)/8.
- ¹¹⁰ *Geschäftsverteilungsplan der Zentralbauleitung der Waffen-SS und Polizei Auschwitz und der unterstellten Bauleitungen.* RGVA, 502-1-57, p. 316.
- ¹¹¹ Flow chart of the *Zentralbauleitung* relating to the essential personnel for the activity of the individual *Bauleitungen*. RGVA, 502-1-57, p.310.
- ¹¹² *Lageplan des Kriegsgefangenenlagers Auschwitz O.S.* VHA, OT31(2)/8.
- ¹¹³ The week is calculated as 6 days: 6 x 50 x 350 = 105,000 working days.
- ¹¹⁴ GARF, 7021-108-32, p. 43.
- ¹¹⁵ Report from Pohl to Himmler dated 16 September 1942 with subject: a) "*Rüstungsarbeiten.* b) *Bombenschäden.*" BAK, NS 19/14, pp. 131-133.
- ¹¹⁶ *Aktenvermerk* of 22 May 1943. 502-1-26, p. 85.
- ¹¹⁷ *Sonderbehandlung* "ad Auschwitz. *Genesi e significato, Special Treatment in Auschwitz. Origin and Meaning of a Term,* *op. cit.*, 56-59. 66-71.
- ¹¹⁸ *Aktenvermerk* of Jothann dated 5 October 1943. RGVA, 502-1-83, p. 77.
- ¹¹⁹ For a more in-depth examination of the question, please see my study "The Morgues of the Crematoria at Birkenau in the Light of Documents," in: *The Revisionist*, Vol. 2, No. 3, August 2004, pp. 271-294.
- ¹²⁰ *Bericht über die Arbeitseinteilung beim Sofortprogramm im K.G.L. Auschwitz* by Bischoff, dated 13 May 1943. RGVA, 502-1-83, p. 338.
- ¹²¹ APMO, BW 30/34, p. 40.
- ¹²² RGVA, 502-1-83, p. 311.
- ¹²³ RGVA, 502-1-312, p. 8.
- ¹²⁴ RGVA, 502-2-54, pp. 77-78.
- ¹²⁵ See in this regard, my study, already cited, "The Morgues of the Crematoria at Birkenau in the Light of Documents," II, The Use of the Morgues of the Crema-

- toria at Birkenau in 1943-1944, in: *The Revisionist*, Vol. 2, No. 3, August 2004, pp. 279-283.
- ¹²⁶ Letter of the *SS-Standortarzt* to the commandant of KL Auschwitz of 20 March 1943 with subject "*Häftlings-Krankenbau – KGL*." RGVA, 502-1-261, p. 112.
- ¹²⁷ Letter from the *SS-Standortarzt* to the *SS-Standortälteste* of 25 May 1944 with object "*Bau von Leichenkammern im KL Auschwitz II*." RGVA, 502-1-170, p. 264.
- ¹²⁸ J.-C. Pressac, *Auschwitz: Technique and operation of the gas chambers*, *op. cit.*, p. 512.
- ¹²⁹ *Häftlingsrevier im Bauabschnitt "3" des K.G.L. Lageplan des männlichen Teils*. RGVA, 502-2-110, illegible page number.
- ¹³⁰ RGVA, 502-1-79, p. 100.
- ¹³¹ *Bericht über den Fortgang der Arbeiten für die Sondermassnahmen im KGL und im Stammlager* drawn up by Bischoff on 13 July 1943. RGVA, 502-1-83, p. 119.
- ¹³² *Bericht über den Fortgang der Arbeiten für die Sondermassnahmen im KGL und im Stammlager* drawn up by Bischoff on 31 July 1943. RGVA, 502-1-83, p. 100.
- ¹³³ *Erläuterungsbericht zum Ausbau des Kriegsgefangenenlagers der Waffen-SS in Auschwitz/OS*. RGVA, 502-2-60, p. 81.
- ¹³⁴ *Bericht über den Fortgang der Arbeiten für die Sondermassnahmen im KGL und im Stammlager* drawn up by Bischoff il 25 settembre 1943. RGVA, 502-1-83, pp. 215-216.
- ¹³⁵ Bischoff was promoted to head of the *Bauinspektion der Waffen-SS und Polizei "Schlesien"*.
- ¹³⁶ *Kostenvoranschlag zum Ausbau des Kriegsgefangenenlagers der Waffen-SS in Auschwitz*. RGVA, 502-2-60, pp. 86-87.
- ¹³⁷ *Bericht über den Fortgang der Bauarbeiten für die Sondermassnahmen im KGL*, drawn up by Jothann on 30 October 1943. RGVA, 502-1-83, p. 198.
- ¹³⁸ RGVA, 502-1-83, p. 158.
- ¹³⁹ Letter from Bischoff to Jothann dated 31 March 1944. RGVA, 502-1-83, p. 34.
- ¹⁴⁰ Typographical error for May 15, 1943.
- ¹⁴¹ Probable typing mistake: should be 47.
- ¹⁴² RGVA, 502-2-110, pp. 1-1a.
- ¹⁴³ RGVA 502-1-261, p. 117.
- ¹⁴⁴ RGVA, 502-1.281, p. 47.
- ¹⁴⁵ RGVA, 502-1-281, page number illegible.
- ¹⁴⁶ Aerial photograph of Birkenau dated 31 May 1944. National Archives, Washington D.C., Mission 60 PRS/462 60SQ, Can D 1508, Exposure 3056.
- ¹⁴⁷ *Fernschreiben* from the head of the *Amt C* of the *SS-Wirtschafts-Verwaltungshauptamt* of the *Zentralbauleitung* dated 2 June 1944. RGVA, 502-1-83, p. 5. Letter from Jothann to the *Bauinspektion der Waffen-SS und Polizei "Schlesien"* dated 2 June 1944. RGVA, 502-1-83, p. 3.
- ¹⁴⁸ Report on *KGL-Bauabschnitt III* drawn up on 16 June 1944 by "*Der Hygieniker der Bauinspektion ,Schlesien'*." RGVA, 502-1-168, pp. 6-6a.
- ¹⁴⁹ C. Mattogno, "I detenuti trasferiti da Auschwitz-Birkenau nel 1944-1945," in: *Auschwitz: trasferimenti e finte gasationis*. Effepi, Genoa 2004, p. 6.

¹⁵⁰ *La deportazione degli ebrei ungheresi nel maggio-luglio 1944*. Effepi, Genoa, 2007, pp. 31-35.

¹⁵¹ RGVA, 502-1-261, pp. 115-115a.

¹⁵² “Gassing” in the text.

¹⁵³ J.-C. Pressac, *Auschwitz: Technique and Operation of the Gas Chambers*, *op. cit.*, p. 512.

COMMENT

Must We Loathe David Irving?

Michael K. Smith

“The chief problem in historical honesty is not outright lying. It is omission or de-emphasis of important data. The definition of ‘important,’ of course, depends on one’s values.” —Howard Zinn, Failure to Quit

This year marks the tenth anniversary of the David Irving – Deborah Lipstadt libel trial. Irving sued Lipstadt and Penguin Books for having called him a “Holocaust Denier” as part of what he claimed was a campaign to ruin his reputation. In his opening statement to the court, he complained that the label Holocaust Denier was a “verbal yellow star,” designed to destroy him for being an enemy of what Norman Finkelstein has termed “The Holocaust Industry.”

Judge Charles Gray did not agree with Irving, but one hardly needs the sanction of judicial opinion to recognize that the Holocaust Denier label is intended to discredit, not illuminate, in the same way that “nigger” is. What would it mean to prove to the satisfaction of a court that someone “really was” a nigger? Only that racism was alive and well in the judicial system. In a similar way, the court’s decision against Irving represents complicity in the demonization of Holocaust heretics, not a victory for history and truth, as was claimed by the capitalist media in the wake of the trial.

No one survives having the denier label affixed to his work, even when one accepts, as Irving does, that the Nazis inflicted appalling carnage on European Jews during World War II. The point of this defamatory label is not the preservation of historical truth (as though historians didn’t regularly falsify history to advance the interests of favored states), but the destruction of official enemies. As the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci put it, intellectuals are “experts in legitimization,” not scholarship, and historical fact is quite beside the point. Irving had to be “delegitimized” not for his historiography but because he publicly challenged the Holy Trinity of what has become a Holocaust religion: (1) homicidal gas chambers (2) the six mil-



March 2003: David Irving outside the Public Records office (National Archives) London. Photo is in the public domain. Source: Wikimedia Commons.

lion (3) intention to exterminate. The Holocaust Industry does not allow anyone to get away with that.

Predictably, the highlight of the case was Auschwitz and the homicidal gas chambers that are said to have existed there. Irving expressed skepticism that there had been any, while defense attorney Richard Rampton flatly rejected the idea that he had any obligation to build an affirmative case for them:

“I am not here to prove that Auschwitz had gas chambers, homicidal gas chambers. I do not need to do that. If you [...] have an open mind and you look at the convergence of evidence—eyewitness testimony from victims, perpetrators, and the contemporaneous documentary evidence and the archeological remains—you are going to conclude, as a matter of probability at the very least, that indeed what the eyewitnesses tell us is true.”

Of course, as my co-blogger Frank Scott points out, this is magical thinking, and a prescription for reducing history to mythology, to wit:

“I am not here to prove that Jesus Christ rose from the dead. I do not need to do that. If you [...] have an open mind and you look at the convergence of evidence – eyewitness testimony from those who saw the empty tomb, Roman perpetrators of the murder, and the contemporaneous documentary evidence and the archeological remains – you are going to conclude that what the Bible tells us is true.”

In the text of his decision Judge Gray admitted he was predisposed to believe in homicidal gas chambers (both sides in the Holocaust controversy agree that there were gas chambers to control disease-spreading lice). “I have to confess that, in common I suspect with most other people,” wrote Gray, “I had supposed that the evidence of mass extermination of Jews in the gas chambers at Auschwitz was compelling.” The judge would have rendered a great public service had he inquired into exactly why a majority of people had come to believe in something whose material basis Gray himself admitted was largely absent. In any case, his predisposition to believe combined with the vast manpower advantage enjoyed by Lipstadt and Penguin Books, made the trial’s outcome easy to predict.

To arrive at the conclusion that homicidal gas chambers existed, the judge accepted the legitimacy of a David Ray Griffin-style “cumulative proof,” which dispensed with the need to find or cite direct evidence – a great convenience. Thus, the defense did not have to suffer the embarrassment of being unable to produce photographs of the homicidal gas chambers or their physical remains, nor contemporary German documents discussing the myriad complexities involved in (allegedly) systematically exterminating millions of people with an industrial assembly line of death.

In effect, the judge asserted that since solid evidence for the homicidal gas chambers was lacking, flimsy evidence would have to do:

“The consequence of the absence of any overt documentary evidence of gas chambers at these camps, coupled with the lack of archeological evidence, means that reliance has to be placed on eyewitness and circumstantial evidence [...]”

But of course no one *has* to grant eyewitness testimony and circumstantial evidence the power to decide the case. After all, a cumulative proof based on inferential speculation is not nearly as convincing as an argument employing direct evidence, and it is curious that an alleged program of industrial extermination should be so lacking in such evidence. Judge Gray, who appeared eager to avoid having to judge historical questions, missed an

opportunity to sidestep the thorny gas chamber question by pointing out the dubious nature of a cumulative proof.

Instead, he endorsed a speculative case based squarely on circumstantial evidence and eyewitness testimony, much of it patently ridiculous, which concluded that there “must have been” homicidal gas chambers. Accepting the validity of “must have been,” of course, requires a certain leap of faith, which the trial’s much invoked “objective, fair-minded historian” should not have required.

Judge Gray asserted that there was a “convergence” of evidence “which is to the ordinary, dispassionate mind overwhelming that hundreds of thousands of Jews were systematically gassed to death at Auschwitz.” But in the very next breath he issued a qualification that ought to be posted at the entrance of every Holocaust museum in the world:

“[...] the contemporaneous documents, such as drawings, plans, correspondence with contractors and the like, yield little clear evidence of the existence of gas chambers designed to kill humans. Such isolated references to the use of gas as are to be found amongst these documents can be explained by the need to fumigate clothes so as to reduce the incidence of diseases such as typhus.”

It’s a wonder Lipstadt didn’t accuse *the judge* of being a Holocaust Denier.

As for the eyewitness evidence, even the Lipstadt-Penguin team had to concede that it was not exactly sound. “The Defendants recognise that not all of the evidence which I have sought to summarise above is altogether reliable,” wrote Judge Gray. “This applies with particular force to the evidence of the eye-witnesses.” He found that “witnesses may have repeated and even embellished the (invented) accounts of other witnesses with the consequence that a corpus of false testimony is built up.” Nevertheless, he concluded that the “cumulative effect of the documentary evidence for the genocidal operation of the gas chambers at Auschwitz is considerable.” How a stream of evidence heavily contaminated by “false testimony” leads an unprejudiced mind to belief rather than skepticism was left rather unclear by the judge.

Irving tried to get the case back on a material footing, but Judge Gray rejected his contention that the absence of (venting) holes in the roof of the morgue at Auschwitz’s crematorium 2 meant that no mass gassing operation could have taken place there. “[...] the apparent absence of evidence of holes in the roof at crematorium 2 falls short of being a good reason for rejecting the *cumulative effect* of the evidence on which the Defendants rely.” (emphasis added.) Defense witness Robert Jan van Pelt suggested

that the holes were cemented in in the fall of 1944. Irving responded scathingly:

“So what you are saying is with the Red Army just over the River Vistula ever since November 1944 and about to invade and the personnel of Auschwitz concentration camp in a blue funk and destroying their records and doing what they can, some SS Rottenfuhrer has been given the rotten job of getting up there with a bucket and spade and cementing in those four holes – in case after we have blown up the building they show?”

On the issue of intentionality, the judge disagreed with Irving about Hitler allegedly not knowing about the “extermination” of the Jews. He claimed that Irving’s ideological convictions distorted his historical findings, allegedly on purpose.

If indeed Irving was guilty of this, that makes him very much *like historians in general*, who regularly falsify the historical record to protect the reputation of their favored states, often quite deliberately. Consider the fact that American historians – for 200 years! – didn’t even mention that Washington deliberately destroyed North American Indian nations.

That’s deliberate falsification.

There are plenty of other examples.

What about the six million? Holocaust death tolls were calculated in the aggregate, based on estimated population sizes. Wrote Judge Gray: “(Christopher) Browning advanced what is in effect a demographic argument in support of the Defendants’ contention that Jews were exterminated in the gas chambers at the death camps in vast numbers. He calculated the approximate number who were deported from western European countries and removed from the ghettos of Poland; he asserted that contemporaneous evidence proves that many of them were transported to Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka [...]” Those unaccounted for were presumed dead in the Holocaust. “[...] since they were never heard of again, *Browning considers it reasonable to infer* that they were put to death in the camps” (emphasis added).

But how accurate were the “estimated” population sizes and the “approximate” number of deportees? Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial in Jerusalem claims it has the names of three million European Jews who died during WWII – including those who died from natural causes – which constitutes only half of the deaths routinely attributed to the Holocaust. What about the other half? Irving claimed that the Jewish death toll at the hands of the Nazis was between one and four million. Since the upper end of his

range exceeds the numbers from Yad Vashem, why is his view considered scandalous? Furthermore, presumed dead is not the same as proven murdered, much less “exterminated” in gas chambers. There are many ways to die, especially in a war zone.

The defense attempted to prove that Irving not only distorted and falsified history, but that he did so from a motive to rehabilitate and resuscitate Nazism. (The hysteria that “it” is about to happen again is routinely used to deflect serious questions about what exactly “it” refers to in the first place.) But Judge Gray stated that, though racist, Irving was not guilty of inciting racist violence. “I accept that Irving is not obsessed with race. He has certainly not condoned or excused racist violence or thuggery. But he has on many occasions spoken in terms which are plainly racist.”

If true, this makes him much like Lipstadt, who opposes intermarriage and condones the founding of a Jewish apartheid state on Palestinian land. Unlike democratic states, Israel is not the state of its citizens, but the state of the Jewish people wherever they happen to be. The Palestinian Arabs are just in the way. Hence the genocidal attempt to eradicate their culture, which is a means of getting them to “voluntarily” leave, so they can be replaced by Jewish immigrants from around the world. In short, Lipstadt’s racism supports the infliction of a massive injustice, while Irving’s does not.

Furthermore, nothing could have been more ironic than the defense’s attempt to smear Irving as an unreconstructed Nazi, dedicated to resurrecting the Hitler regime. For while Irving did nothing more serious than give talks, Germany led a successful campaign in the Balkans throughout the 1990s to promote ethnic homogeneity by force, a bedrock Nazi principle, ultimately dismembering Yugoslavia into ethnic statelets under foreign control, a policy which was (1) illegal (2) based on a demonized caricature of the Serbs that showed a striking resemblance to Nazi propaganda in the 1940s (3) carried out in alliance with the descendants of Hitler’s Muslim and Croatian allies, justly famous for drug trafficking, kidnapping, rape, and murder.

In 1999, just months before the Lipstadt-Irving trial began, the *Luftwaffe* bombed Yugoslavia on the pretext that Germany was overcoming its evil past and becoming a “normal nation” (*i.e.*, an aggressive one) by attacking a Serbian Hitler (Slobodan Milosevic) who was allegedly committing genocide, though the fact of the matter was that there were no refugees during the last five months of peace and the internally displaced persons fleeing the three-way ethnic conflict numbered only a few thousand. But in the cartoon-like morality play shown on Western T.V., the Serbs were cast as

Oriental barbarians, while the Croats and Muslims starred as their perpetually innocent victims.

German leaders announced that precisely because of the German role in the Holocaust, they had to abandon Berlin's pledge to forever renounce the use of military intervention abroad. This so-called humanitarian imperialism, noted author Diana Johnstone, expressed "perfect continuity with the most aggressive traditions of German policy toward the Balkans as practiced by Berlin in two world wars." In particular, the round condemnation of an entire ethnic group (Serbs) was "reminiscent of the pre-war propaganda against the Jews," she wrote.

But at the Irving-Lipstadt trial the judge and the general public were led to believe that David Irving was the real Nazi, because he gave a speech that inspired a group of skinheads to shout "*Sieg Heil*." Ask Yugoslavians if they think this is worse than the bombing campaign that destroyed their houses, old-age homes, hospitals, outdoor markets, buses, trains, columns of fleeing refugees, and the Chinese Embassy.

The fact of the matter is, there is no reason to accept the demonized image of Irving handed on to us by his political enemies. Moreover, even they concede that his efforts have contributed to the development of fresh historical research. Defense witness Christopher Browning, for example, admitted to Irving that his book, *Hitler's War*, "was the impetus for research . . . on decision-making process and Hitler's role." Meanwhile, Judge Gray had considerable praise to offer Irving the military historian:

"My assessment is that as a military historian, Irving has much to commend him. For his works of military history Irving has undertaken thorough and painstaking research into the archives. He has discovered and disclosed to historians and others many documents which, but for his efforts, might have remained unnoticed for years. It was plain from the way in which he conducted his case and dealt with a sustained and penetrating cross-examination that his knowledge of World War 2 is unparalleled. His mastery of the detail of the historical documents is remarkable. He is beyond question able and intelligent. He was invariably quick to spot the significance of documents which he had not previously seen. Moreover, he writes his military history in a clear and vivid style. I accept the favourable assessment by Professor Watt and Sir John Keegan of the calibre of Irving's military history and reject as too sweeping the negative assessment of [defense witness Richard] Evans."

Furthermore, the idea that an ideologically committed historian is intrinsically more susceptible to historical falsification is unfounded. As Michael

Parenti, a firmly committed anti-capitalist and an outstanding scholar puts it:

“Many mainstream academics manifest a remarkable detachment from the urgent realities of the world. What is unsettling is how this is treated as a scholarly virtue. Supposedly such detachment helps them to retain their objectivity. In fact, much of the best scholarship comes from ideologically committed scholars. Thus, it is female and African American researchers who respectively have produced the best work on the oppressions of sexism and racism, areas that their white male colleagues never imagined were fit subjects for study. It is they, in their partisan urgency, who have revealed the unexamined sexist and racist presumptions of conventional scholarship in the sciences and social sciences.”

And it is David Irving and the Holocaust revisionists who have in *their* partisan urgency revealed a Holocaust dogma masquerading as history. We needn't loathe them. In fact, we ought to help them, for who fails to benefit when the layers of legend and myth encrusting our history are peeled away?

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REVIEWS

The True Story of Andersonville Prison

reviewed by Jett Rucker

The True Story of Andersonville Prison, by James Madison Page and M. J. Haley. Digital Scanning, Inc., Scituate, Mass. 1999 [1908] 248 pp.

Rather like history in general, revisionism seems to be grouped into “waves” or “generations” that follow major wars. Thus, Harry Elmer Barnes led the first major wave of revisionism that seemed, at least for a time, to succeed in the aftermath of the First World War. Barnes was still a commanding figure in the wave that followed the Second World War, though this wave, ominously, seems at the present remove never to have attained as high a crest as the wave following the preceding world war did (and *not* for lack of “water”).

Revision of the histories of earlier wars, in America most notably the American Revolution and the War between the States, continues apace, along with the I-was-there revisions following the numerous conflicts that have followed the Second World War right up to the present. What seems sometimes not appreciated in the present time is that contemporaneous waves of revisionism actually are to be noted following those earlier (pre-Barnes) conflicts, notably the War between the States.

Perhaps the bulk of the revisionism following the War between the States concerned the depredations of Abraham Lincoln’s administration on the civil rights of political opponents (especially newspaper publishers and political figures) in the states constituting “the Union” during that war. Thomas DiLorenzo’s *Lincoln Unmasked* and William Marvel’s *Mr. Lincoln Goes to War* are especially good accounts of this revisionism, but they are themselves too recent to be part of the postbellum wave themselves. Another subject of that wave of revisionism, however, concerned the prisoner-of-war camps operated by the Confederacy—and the Union—and the one and only war-crimes trial conducted after the War, by the victor, of course, in Washington, D.C.

This book came out near the “tail” of the post-bellum wave, having been originally published in 1908. It was republished a number of times since then, most-recently as a digital reproduction in 1999 by Digital Scan-

ning, Inc. of Scituate, Mass. A “digital reproduction” in this case is apparently an electronic resetting of the type, from scans of the original text. Beautifully clean, sharp type that nonetheless looks very much like the original typeface looks, and none of the fuzz and dropouts that plague reprints of legacy documents such as this one.

If the War between the States had ended when the Second World War ended in 1945, this book’s 1908 debut would have occurred in 1988, so it was rather “fresher” vis-à-vis its subject than today’s books revising the Second World War. Of course, unlike today’s books about the Second World War, this book was written by an eyewitness about his own experiences, at the notorious prisoner-of-war camp nicknamed “Andersonville” after the name of the train station, Anderson Station, Georgia, where prisoners got off the train and marched to the nearby camp. It was upon reading of this march from the train station to the camp that the first “reverse echo” of descriptions of German concentration camps came to me. Many of these echoes, eerie in their totality, were to strike me in the rest of the reading partly, I suppose, because I have made a lifelong study of Second World War concentration camps—and not just those established and operated by the Germans.

In the period between the 1865 end of the War between the States and the 1908 publication of this memoir, dozens of accounts by putative survivors of Andersonville and other Confederate POW camps were published and introduced into the public’s “understanding” of what happened in and around these camps, and who (invariably the dastardly Confederates) might be assigned blame for the very real horrors that actually did occur in those times and places. The great bulk of this body of literature pandered to that taste which is to be found among members of every public for the sensational and the simple-to-believe, and at least some of them performed quite well the function that they were designed to perform—they made money, sympathy, and fame for their authors, many of whom had of course never set foot anywhere near a POW camp, nor for that matter worn a uniform.

It is primarily this grossly fabricated, sensationalized, commercialized spate of tabloid histories that Page revises, and he confronts a number of these accounts by name and author, quoting them at length, and pointing out where they are false, and what the truth might instead be. This is what might be called “confrontative,” or a point-by-point revision, and particularly for a reader from outside contemporary times, as we all now are and ever will be, it is a far more-informative kind of revision than the kind that sets the record straight without explicit reference to the crooked particulars

of the record that it is straightening. Items of this description punctuate the account throughout, considerably illuminating and enlivening it for those of us from outside the period.

James Madison Page is presented in the book as 2nd. Lieut., Company A, Sixth Michigan Cavalry, but if he had been that when captured on September 21, 1863, he would never have gotten near the camp, officially known as Camp Sumter to the Confederates, which was only for enlisted men. Page's promotion to commissioned officer occurred long after the war, perhaps just before his retirement—perhaps a promotion intended primarily to raise the amount of his pension. Page does not give his rank at the time of his capture, but it appears that it might have been corporal or sergeant, nor does he mention the exclusion of officers from Andersonville.

The narrative of Page's capture, transportation, and existence in Andersonville and before it in a Virginia camp known as Belle Isle conform in general outline to other accounts of persons sharing his experience (of whom most survived, and many told): the general deprivation of diversions, pleasures, and often enough, various necessities; the recurrent wild-fires of rumors having mostly to do with prisoner exchanges, which actually occurred sporadically particularly early in the war; the monstrous uncertainties that plague any and every captive of hostiles in all history. But one element stands out conspicuously in Page's story that is absent from most of its competitors: the compassion, even occasional caring, if not respect, evidenced by Confederate soldiers and guards for the Union soldiers for each of whom, they all knew, there was at least one Confederate prisoner in the hands of Union captors.

Page's enumeration of countless minor considerations, mercies, even interventions in support of peace, order, even occasionally comfort for the prisoners are compelling in the specificity of the details with which they are recounted. The author occasionally digresses into generalized expiations about the typical and usual disposition and temper of the Southern soldier, and his terms occasionally verge on the rhapsodic. This view of his captivity and captors, of course, clashes with the typical review presented by any former inmate who at all times when crafting his memoir must be conscious that some renditions of events will engender greater interest and sympathy for the author than other renditions. Every eyewitness must combat or, in other cases, exploit this factor in rendering the sort of account that serves whatever his purposes might be in rendering it. Exactly what purposes Page might be serving other than the "truth and justice" mentioned on the back cover of the paperback seem difficult to conjure.

Aside from the march from the train station to the camp, a number of other aspects of Part I, "Andersonville: The Prisoners and Their Keeper" reminded me of accounts of German concentration camps. Of these, the one that most stands out is the "poisoned vaccine" for smallpox that was administered for a time during Page's term. The smallpox intended to be controlled had actually broken out, according to Page's observation. It was effectively controlled, Page continues, by the prompt removal and quarantining of every affected inmate, and by the administration of a very likely crude vaccine to inmates who could not show evidence of having already been inoculated. Among those vaccinated, there was a notable number of fatal reactions, not altogether unexpected even with the best pharmaceutical technology and medical care available at the time, to say nothing of the pertinent standards prevailing at Andersonville.

Inevitably, the rumor got about that this vaccine was deliberately poisoned so as to kill inmates. This account reminded me of the tale ruling the mainstream history of today that the Germans adapted the fumigant Zyklon-B, brought into their camps and used in great quantities for disinfection purposes, to the killing of inmates. Some or all of the vaccine used at Andersonville may have been lethal, and this might have been inadvertent, negligent, or even deliberate; deaths positively did ensue from its use. Some of the Zyklon-B used in the concentration camps may have resulted in the death of inmates; indeed, fatal accidents in the use of Zyklon-B for its designed purpose were at all times a real possibility. But at Auschwitz as at Andersonville, the evidence for the allegations becomes progressively scainter as the allegations become progressively more brutal and intentionally homicidal.

It seems that somehow, Sergeant (or whatever his rank was) Page had a good deal of direct contact and actual dealings with Captain Wirz. While an actual friendship could hardly have grown up between commandant and inmate, Page claims a notably cordial working relationship between the two soldiers and describes it in detail on a number of significant and specific occasions. In this period, Page acquired an in-depth understanding of Wirz's character, interests, and even foibles that undoubtedly informed his view of the subsequent tribunal proceedings against him.

Part II of this book, "Henry Wirz: The Man and His Trial" contains the bulk of the undeniable atrocities of the story, and most of these involve the maladministration of a simulacrum of "justice" at the military tribunal assembled for Wirz's conviction and his subsequent hanging in October 1865. This final quarter or so of the book, with the adduction of the "evidence" in the case, its verdict, its sentence, and the carrying out of the sen-

tence, reminded me of the case of Rudolf Höss, commandant of the Auschwitz camp, in 1946-47 before a Polish tribunal, which produced the same sentence and end result. While I have not yet discovered a (translated) transcript of the Höss proceedings, I have studied at length reports of the “trials” (they were all military tribunals, which should in no way be mistaken for legitimate, much less fair, trials beyond their similarity of producing verdicts and sentences) held in Nuremberg, Dachau, and other places in the western zones of occupied Germany. It was of the details of these chiefly American-conducted proceedings that the details of Wirz’s proceeding most strikingly reminded me; indeed, Wirz’s proceeding also was entirely American.



Rudolf Höss, Commandant of Auschwitz. Photo is in the public domain. Source: Wikimedia Commons.

Many of the defendants (referred to as “accused”) at Dachau and like venues were hampered by language barriers from understanding the proceedings of which they were the subject, and were similarly hampered in their ability to testify and respond to questioning in court (most of their testimony was elicited in pre-trial sessions with interrogators and translators). Wirz attended his proceedings and obviously understood what was being said at all times, but he seems not to have testified at all. In fact, Wirz was suffering from war wounds* at the time, and often lay on a couch as he observed the proceedings.

The author never states explicitly that he was present for any, much less all, of the 73 consecutive days of the proceeding, but it seems very clear that he was. He wanted, in fact, to be called as a witness to testify to the many things he knew and had seen concerning the acts of the accused, but out of all the dozens like him, less than twelve witnesses were called, each of these quite evidently carefully vetted, scripted, and rehearsed, a circumstance very much in evidence and much noted by Joseph Halow in his moving book, *Innocent at Dachau*.

The mendacity of all the witnesses against Wirz was borne out not only by many telltale inconsistencies and unlikelihoods in their testimonies but as well by revelations uncovered long after the tribunal (and the execution

of its innocent subject), disclosing typically that the very identities of the witnesses had been falsified, and the evidence as to their whereabouts during the times they claimed to have observed Major Wirz's acts most dubious.

The charges against Wirz bore a general resemblance to the charges against accuseds at Dachau: that said accused on such-and-such a date did, with malice aforethought, and so on, kill, strike, injure so-and-so, a prisoner in his charge, with one consistent exception that seems unbelievable in a present-day reading: *no name of any victim was ever specified!* Major Wirz was accused of a total of 13 single killings to which "witnesses" testified, on various dates including dates on which Wirz was documentably far away from Andersonville on furlough, but in every case, it was stated that the name of the victim was *stated* to be unknown. Wirz was hanged for killing—typically shooting—nobodies, an allegation the author stated his inclination to reject even had real, dead Andersonville inmates been named as victims.

One aspect of Wirz's handling during and especially after the trial had potentially momentous implications, but these in fact never arose, evidently from Wirz's heroic refusal to lie. Page carefully documents an initiative that came apparently from the office of Secretary of War Edwin Stanton to commute Wirz's death sentence on the condition that he give evidence implicating former Confederate President Jefferson Davis in a plan to starve or otherwise kill prisoners of war in his custody. It's impossible to know, of course, whether Stanton would have made good on his offer of clemency, but Wirz never gave any such evidence, and he swung from the end of a rope. Stanton's character as presented in the final chapter of the book inclines one to presume that Wirz might have met the same end even if he had given the desired "evidence."

A consistent theme, evidently goal, of the prosecutions at Nuremberg, Dachau and elsewhere seems to have been to implicate Himmler, Hitler, and other very-senior Nazis in various programs of atrocity, in particular genocides against Jews and other targeted racial groups. Höss implicates Himmler rather unconvincingly in his memoirs as having ordered him to exterminate concentration-camp inmates systematically and in large numbers, and through hearsay (quoting Himmler's spoken words), he attempts to implicate Hitler as the source of the orders. And Höss also swung from a rope, though perhaps somewhat later than he might have had he not been quite so prolific while being held in a Polish prison.

In this, the cases of Höss and Wirz would seem to diverge, but this divergence might hinge to some extent on other divergences. Höss's family

had been threatened initially by British soldiers in order to find Höss himself, and his family appeared to continue to be subject to mistreatment. No such possibility appears in Page's account of Wirz's case. In fact, the movements of Mrs. Wirz and their children from place to place before and during his proceeding give every appearance of their being entirely free even of surveillance. Likewise, Höss in Polish captivity wrote of being tortured by the British while he was in their custody, and had he not been in Polish custody, he might have written of similar treatment at the Poles' hands. As it was, he reported a significant amount of mistreatment and severe neglect. Page gives no indication whatsoever that Wirz was tortured at any point. In fact, in comparison with the later period, the dealings of the Nineteenth Century impart an impression of a significantly more-civilized time in general.

Many hapless inquirers into the particulars of genocides committed during the Second World War have expressed the opinion that German depredations formed but one of a long and horrible series of genocides going far back into antiquity and extending later into times long after the end of the war. For this, they have been branded "Holocaust deniers" by detractors asserting that at least some of Germany's supposed genocidal aims somehow constituted unique novelties in the annals of human behavior.

Readers of *The True Story of Andersonville Prison* will be tempted, if they react to it the way I did, to see the postwar prosecutions in Germany, Poland and later in Israel as but more of a continuum reaching back into human history as far back as tribunals and drumhead courts have been contrived to reinforce the propaganda value of retributive killings by the victors of wars. Persons so inclined, however, would do well to heed the fate of those reaching a similar conclusion regarding wartime deaths of non-combatants at the hands of the losers: pronouncing continuities in history can still, 65 years after the end of the war, get you in big trouble, even jail sentences, in a number of "advanced" western countries.

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Literary Hoaxes: An Eye-Opening History of Famous Frauds

reviewed by Chip Smith

Literary Hoaxes: An Eye-Opening History of Famous Frauds, by Melissa Katsoulis, Skyhorse Publishing, 328 pages, 2009.

When I was a kid, I looked forward to visiting my father on weekends. He would pick me up after school on Fridays, and we would usually head over to Shoney's or the local bowling alley where Dad would drink cup after cup of black coffee and entertain me with stories and reminiscences, mostly drawn from his early life in a rural Appalachian town. There were hunting stories and sports stories, but the ones I liked best were about trouble. My father's boyhood, I gathered or imagined, was a chronicle of dangerous and violent adventure. With rapt attention, I would listen as he told me about schoolyard fights and brushes with the dark forces of nature. "Where you scared?" I would ask at a pause. And he would assure me that yes, he was scared. But the fear gives way to a different energy. I wondered if I would ever understand.

Just as vividly, I remember the times when my father seemed distracted. Something in the news would have him rankled and the flow of nostalgic storytelling would be traded for a different stream of commentary – fulmination, really – over what he perceived to be the sorry state of world affairs. At such times, Dad would drum his fingers in restive spurts and on more occasions than I can recall, his tone would become ominous as he ventured to tell me about "the book."

"I never got my hands on a copy," he recalled. "I read about it years ago in a magazine – I think it was *Readers Digest* – in the waiting room at the doctor's office." The book, he went on to explain, was written in the 1920s by a "British Communist" and it provided an inside account of what could fairly be described as a far-flung cultural conspiracy. It outlined an intricate commie-directed plan whereby high-ranking media moguls and government moles were being covertly enlisted in an insidious plot to undermine the traditional foundations of Western civilization by injecting subversive ideas – notably about civil rights and women's liberation – into the susceptible minds of the hapless and ever-malleable masses. The idea, though my father never quite stated it in such terms, was to lull the proles

into a state hypnotic complacency, ensuring that they would lie back and take it when the sickle came down.

Dad could never remember the name of the book, but when he mentioned it again recently, I decided to do some Googling. It didn't take long to discover that the "book" he had in mind was in fact nothing more than a half-formed hoax most likely concocted by the red-baiting anti-Semite, Eustace Mullins, who died earlier this year. Far from being a full-scale literary hoax, the story of the fabled tract – ostensibly entitled *A Racial Program for the Twentieth Century* – traced to a single quotation that was widely reported in the popular media after it was read by a Mississippi Congressman during a floor debate over the 1957 Civil Rights bill. Attributed to one "Israel Cohen" (please), who was indeed described as being a British Communist, the book was said to have been written in 1912 (not in the 1920s as my father recalled), fully eight years before the British Communist Party came into existence. When newspaper editors attempted to track down the source of the quotation, they were initially referred to a letter to the editor that had run in the *Washington Star*. A subsequent investigation soon hung the quote on Mr. Mullins, who claimed to have transcribed it from a Zionist text during his researches at the Library of Congress.

Needless to add, the primary source remained elusive for the simple reason that it never existed. Given enough time and initiative, perhaps Mullins would have drafted up a full-scale forgery (it wouldn't have been his first), but the bud was nipped just as the seed was sown. While retractions and corrections were printed in due course, people like my father would remember – and believe – only the story of a darkly prophetic book that detailed the occult machinations of forces most sinister.

While *A Racial Program for the Twentieth Century* goes unmentioned in Melissa Katsoulis's *Literary Hoaxes: An Eye-Opening History of Famous Frauds* (originally published in the UK under the more mischievously clever title, *Telling Tales*), she does provide an engaging account of the mystery and mystique surrounding the more infamous literary fabrication from which Eustace Mullins's aborted hoax was surely inspired, if not derived. In agreement with most scholars, Katsoulis suspects *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* to have been the work of Pytor Ivanovich Rachovsky, a prominent counter-revolutionary member of the Russian secret police driven by nostalgia for the aristocratic order and "for whom the prospect of a Jewish rebellion was regarded as a real possibility." Rachovsky's imputed authorship of *The Protocols* was first conjectured (and arguably proven) in 1921 when *The Times* published a detailed expose by Philip Graves

where it was argued that the old-guard loyalist had essentially clipped and pasted and plagiarized from obscure scraps to construct what has since become one of the most notoriously influential literary frauds in modern history. Katsoulis ends her brief study of the affair on a pensive and somewhat treacly note, wondering whether Rachovsky would “regret the end result of his hoax if he could have lived to see it acted on so terribly by Hitler and others? Or would he look upon the afterlife of his hoax with pride?” The sentiment behind Katsoulis’s rhetorical question is understood, but it misses a more salient point about the attraction of literary hoaxes, especially those drawn out of political animus. Individual hoaxers are far less significant than the cultural milieu in which their inventions find traction.

Indeed, if Katsoulis’s broader study of an important subject has an overarching weakness, it is that she consistently over-emphasizes the psychological portraiture of hoaxers, while downplaying the cultural context in which their fakes find such special resonance before, and often after, the debunking is done. Had I confronted my father with a detailed account of the story behind “the book” that never was, I’m sure he would have been incredulous, or perhaps indifferent. “No,” he would have assured me, “this was a different book. I remember reading about it in a magazine – I think it was *Reader’s Digest*...” Such is the nature of belief. When a story fills a void, there will always be an audience and truth be damned. If a bristly Russian reactionary hadn’t penned *The Protocols of Zion*, another fabrication would have come forth to sate the demons in time.

Yet I don’t want to be too hard on Katsoulis over the “rogues gallery” approach she adopts in chronicling select literary shenanigans. She pretends to no semiotic ambition, after all, and the strategy she employs has the merit of being entertaining. Katsoulis is nothing if not a raconteur, and the case studies on display are leavened with pith and good humor throughout. Despite a few cloying turns of phrase, her prose is generally crisp and lively. At her best, Katsoulis writes with a distinctive – though never distracting – British sensibility that at times assumes a wicked edge, as when she exposes the myriad frauds concocted by *Go Ask Alice* fraudster Beatrice Sparks. Moreover, her approach is particularly well-suited to the form of popular debunking, and by placing personalities front and center, she raises an interesting point more often than not. With inevitable exceptions (Konrad Kajau’s fabrication of the *The Hitler Diaries* being perhaps most conspicuous), most of the hoaxers that Katsoulis profiles appear not to have acted out of purely venal motives – at least not initially. More common are dilettantes and misfits who seem driven by a kind of misguid-

ed wish fulfillment. Others are motivated by personal enmity or a longing for acceptance. Some are mere tricksters, often with an axe to grind. And others, such as the “emotionally fragile” fake Holocaust memoirist Benjamin Wilkomirski (to whom we shall turn shortly) seem to have been genuinely deluded.

Katsoulis’s survey is sprawling and, as she admits in her introduction, in no way comprehensive (hoax buffs will keep a running list of omissions). Her focus shifts breezily from Native-American pretenders (perhaps epitomized by the career of Archie Belaney, a.k.a. “Grey Owl” whose false persona played so well with the nascent environmentalist movement) to invariably race-preoccupied Australian hoaxes, to phony war stories and mafia memoirs, to classic Shakespeare forgeries, celebrity memoirs, “misery memoirs” (where the James Frey fiasco looms large, even if Katsoulis is remiss not to mention John Dolan’s prescient debunking), and, of necessity, to hoaxes in the key of religion (a subject frankly too vast for the hit-and-run treatment accorded by Katsoulis).

Banking off the work of the American hoaxologist Brian McHale, Katsoulis’s loose patchwork is held together under a somewhat fuzzy and arguably superfluous typology that slots literary hoaxes into three (always three!) broad and occasionally overlapping categories. These are: 1. the “genuine hoax” (“dishonest literary creations which are intended never to be exposed,”), 2. the “entrapment hoax” (intended “to lure a particular academic, publisher, or literary community with a prank text”), and 3. the “mock hoax” (“in which a genuinely experimental writer plays conscious tricks with the very notion of authorship to create a voice which is neither quite theirs nor someone else’s”).

While “genuine hoaxes” receive primacy of attention, it is interesting to observe where even here the lines may blur, as Katsoulis implicitly acknowledges in her treatment of the works once attributed to the precocious literary dynamo who was introduced to the literati as “J.T. LeRoy.” LeRoy was a preposterously conceived character, ostensibly bred and abused in the West Virginia coal fields only to become a cross-dressing truck stop whore with a heart of gold. When I picked up “his” first memoir-novel, *Sarah*, I immediately smelled a rat, but I knew just the same that it was a playful rat. So when it was revealed that LeRoy was in fact the literary alter-ego of a marginally known indie musician named Laura Albert, I wasn’t in the least surprised. The joke, if it can be considered a joke, was on the established literary class who bought into the tripped-out Dorothy Allison mystique with such wishful credulity. Even if the affair – which ultimately entailed litigation – is generally categorized as a “genuine

hoax,” I think there’s something more than face-saving to Albert’s steadfast defense that the LeRoy persona was better understood as “a veil,” which is to say, a “mock hoax,” perhaps with shades of entrapment. Discuss.

When, to her credit, Katsoulis turns her attention to the discomfiting subject of fake Holocaust memoirs (“genuine” hoaxes all, at least for now), the limitations of her personality-centered approach become more apparent. While her discussion of three indisputable fakers – Benjamin Wilkomirski, Misha Levy Defonseca, and Herman Rosenblat (curiously, the case of Jerzey Kosinski goes unmentioned) – comes laced with obligatory expressions of naval-gazing indignation that any sane person could concoct tales appropriating the “massively emotive signifier of Nazism,” it should be obvious to anyone paying attention that the horrorshow backdrop of established Holocaust historiography provides fertile ground for the confabulations, fantasies, and lurid tales that, from the beginning, have attached. The motifs are well-established, the thematic terrain arable, and the Manichean forces at the center of the bleak narrative set the perfect template for direful meditation and moral edification, however sentimental or rarefied the phrasing. And of course, there must be an audience, clamoring for more. It really is no coincidence that Katsoulis’s star satanic abuse prevaricator – one Laurel Rose Wilson, a.k.a. “Laura Grabowski” – doubled-teamed as an Auschwitz survivor and Mengele torture subject, no less and even corresponded with dour old Wilkomirski, her fantasy chum from darker days.

Rare is the literary hoax that doesn’t collapse under rudimentary scrutiny, and phony Holocaust memoirs are no different. It just takes a little longer for word to get out, and it probably helps when the hoaxers turn out not to be Jewish (as was the case with two out of three of the H-fakers profiled in *Literary Hoaxes*). In Wilkomirski’s case, the edifice of his childhood memoir *Fragments* began to crumble soon after a sleuthing skeptic wrote up a carefully researched exposé in the Swiss magazine *Weltwoche*, revealing the aging fantasist’s true identity as an orphaned Christian named Bruno Grosjean, who, it seemed reasonable to speculate, had simply projected his own unhappy childhood memories onto the Grand Guignol of the Twentieth Century. And if the maudlin tropes involving savior wolves and apple tossing love gestures weren’t enough to sow doubt in the cases of Defonseca and Rosenblat, lupine behaviorists and camp geographers were on hand to consign their trite vagaries to dust.

Of course, Katsoulis disdains to entertain the possibility that the phony Holocaust memoir genre may have deeper roots than such notoriously de-

throned examples permit us to consider. With reference to the only slightly more-sophisticated yarns spun by the “acknowledged stars of Holocaust memoir” such as Primo Levi and Elie Wiesel, she proffers nary an ort of qualified skepticism. Nor does she acknowledge that Holocaust revisionists have long deployed the same veridical tools and critical methods favored by less odious debunkers to expose serious flaws and discrepancies in the works of the most celebrated and memorialized Holocaust memoirists, including that truly tragic figure, Anne Frank. In my view, revisionists – beginning with Robert Faurisson – have compiled a compelling dossier suggesting that the world-famous “Diary of a Young Girl” was posthumously embellished with such ingenuity and to such an extent as to constitute a wholesale fraud. Yet Katsoulis doesn’t go there. She doesn’t even acknowledge that a dispute exists, relevant as the point should be. To do so would be to enter the mind of a Christian apologist who sets out to examine the Apocrypha only to end up questioning the entire Canon.

The distinction between Holocaust historiography and Holocaust literature has long been guarded by scholars and cultural gatekeepers, much as the distinction is increasingly demarcated between the fake Holocaust memoirs that draw scandalous headlines and embarrass Oprah and the presumably legitimate ones whose essential veracity good people are obliged not to question. In truth, such distinctions have never held up well under examination. The uniquely atrocious elements of the standard history trace to germinal rumors which, in turn, served to fertilize a culture of anxiously overwrought storytelling. The historians came later to supply a formal foundation to an already-emergent narrative. They ran with the stories in currency, and strove to make the pieces fit into place. Efforts to disentangle the resulting knots are thus complicated, in part by overconfidence, in part by a very human temptation to gloss and retrofit disparate scraps to better suit a prevailing narrative. Caught in the mire, false witnesses simply emote on cue.

Near the conclusion of his magnum opus, *The Destruction of the European Jews*, esteemed Holocaust historiographer Raul Hilberg interprets the administrative system of Nazi genocide in terms that tempt metaphysical despair, arguing that the “conveyor belt” by which human exterminations were carried out arose out of a kind of brute teleology, the culmination of which took “millennia in the development of Western Culture.” Hilberg assures readers that “the Jewish crowds which surged into the gas chambers were incapable of fighting back.” Conditioned as they were by two thousand years of fabled history, “they had deliberately unlearned the art of revolt.” Thus they trembled in fateful obedience before the whip-wielding

executioners who live on – and in essential particulars originated – in the minds of fanciful Holocaust memoirists. While Hilberg's editorial reflections may be read to depict a uniquely horrific crisis of modernism, it is difficult to escape the quasi-mythic fundament upon which his dire pronouncement is situated. The Holocaust story simply cannot be dislodged from its theodical moorings. It resonates as a Job-like tale of divinely ordained suffering, just as an audience demanded. Memoirists are wise to the form, while otherwise-careful scholars are too often rendered stupid by the mythic penumbra. This is how the lines are blurred.

Considered against the taboo-enshrouded mythos that accredited historians have done their part to establish as verity, the transparently fraudulent works of the troubled Holocaust memoirists profiled by Katsoulis are neither exceptional nor aberrant; their tales simply follow the line already cast into darkness unbound. And they work, perhaps too clumsily, within a narrative framework that guarantees a receptive readership. There is no cause for soul-searching here. Nor are there grounds for apology, such as that which Katsoulis tacitly extends on behalf of Wilkomirski when she observes that his discredited memoir is imbued with "an overwhelming feeling of young Benjamin's powerlessness at the hands of the adult forces [...] who have total control over his fate." Wilkomirski's sense of childlike vertigo before implacable forces is entirely consonant with the meta-mythic *idée fixe* evinced in the explanatory reflections proffered by Hilberg, the real historian. The literary *modus operandi* is par for the course. A genre device.

Shielded by volumes of hagiographic portraiture, Elie Wiesel's neo-midrashic fables have largely escaped the scrutiny of would-be debunkers (revisionists notwithstanding). It will be interesting to see whether the old sage retains his halo if the conjectures of some tenacious revisionists pan out and he turns out to have trespassed beyond the bounds of conventionally excusable embellishment. To the extent that his oeuvre has been interpreted critically to date, criticism has typically taken the form of careful apologetics couched to remove Holocaust literature from the purview of creeping revisionism. Yet it is perhaps telling that the famed misery memoirist has occasionally invoked laconically parsed qualifications in defense of the essential truth of storytelling that lives at necessary tension with objective reality. "No witness is capable of recounting everything from start to finish anyway," Wiesel wrote in his memoir *All Rivers Run to the Sea*, "God alone knows the whole story." In other contexts, Katsoulis refers to this stance as "pleading an alternative truth," and as plea bargains go, it's a decent gambit. Trouble is, it just as easily provides a convenient cover for

bullshit. Anyway, Wilkomirski says something similar these days. We shouldn't read too much into these things.

In an underappreciated essay entitled "Wilkomirski and What It Means," the maligned American revisionist Arthur Butz poses a question that presses neatly against the matter. "Does our dispute with the defenders of the entrenched legend arise not over what happened?" Butz asks, "but over what it means for something to 'happen'? Is the dispute metaphysical rather than historical? Or is it neither?"

As cherished distinctions between fact, fiction and fraud converge and collapse as they must, and as lines are drawn and revised perforce, I believe that Butz's epistemological query will assume greater relevance. If the marginal sideshow of Holo-hoaxery presented by Katsoulis spills into more hallowed ground, a postmodern impasse seems inevitable.

It may even be necessary to invent a fourth category.

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PROFILES IN HISTORY

John T. Flynn

L.A. Rollins

Born in 1882, in Bladensburg, Maryland, John Thomas Flynn was raised in a Catholic family.

Though he never attended college, Flynn graduated from Georgetown Law School in the early years of the 20th century. While attending law school, Flynn enjoyed listening to Congressional debates on nearby Capitol Hill. One such debate was the January 9, 1900, Beveridge-Hoar Senate debate on the issue of keeping the Philippines under U.S. control. This debate contributed to Flynn's lifelong opposition to imperialism. Indeed, Flynn quoted from this debate in the section on "American Imperialism" in his 1944 book, *As We Go Marching*.

Though he had a law degree, Flynn never practiced law, for he wanted to be a writer. In 1916, he began a writing career with the *New Haven Register*. He soon rose to become city editor of the paper. He moved to the *New York Globe* and was editor and managing editor from 1920 to 1923. After the *Globe* folded in 1923, he became a freelance writer, and eventually had 13 books on business, economics, and politics published.

Flynn became well known as a liberal journalist by doing a column titled "Other People's Money," the same title as a book by Louis Brandeis. He wrote this column for the *New Republic* from 1933 until November 1940, when it was dropped, apparently because of the noninterventionist sentiments he was expressing in the column. During the 1930s, he was also a Scripps-Howard syndicated columnist, wrote a series, "Plain Economics," which appeared in various newspapers, was associate editor of *Collier's* magazine, and contributed articles to various journals.

Meanwhile, Flynn also worked as a member of the staff of the Pecora Commission, which investigated the stock market in 1933, and he was economic advisor to the Nye Committee, which, in 1934-1935, investigated the World War I profits of munitions manufacturers, the ever-popular "merchants of death." He was also a Fiorello LaGuardia appointee to the New York City Board of Higher Education from 1935 to 1944.

Flynn considered himself a liberal all his life. He defined his liberalism as "not so much a collection of beliefs as a character of mind. It is not far

removed from tolerance—not[...]for men but for ideas.” A liberal is a rebel against any kind of dogma, and, he said, his most important quality is “a willingness to examine the ideas of other men and to reexamine his own.”

Regarding economics and politics, Flynn’s liberalism was influenced by the aforementioned Louis Brandeis and was not pure Jeffersonianism or hard-core libertarianism. Because of the development of cartels and trusts, he believed some government regulation was necessary to prevent monopolies, which he saw as a barrier to new private investment. According to Flynn’s daughter, Michele Flynn Stenehjem, in *An American First*, page 28, “If capitalism were to be preserved, he said in 1931, liberal leaders would have to move beyond the



John T. Flynn, American journalist, author of The Roosevelt Myth. Source: Wikimedia commons. Author Dick Clark Mises. Official license.

Jeffersonian position, take cognizance of the development of cartels and trusts, and actively work with government to make the economic system behave ‘as a social economy rather than a racket.’” But he did not want the government to become an economic power itself, and he was not a socialist.

Flynn believed that Herbert Hoover had allowed the Great Depression to occur by his failure to regulate the stock market. (I realize that some revisionists, especially libertarians, will disagree with this explanation of the Depression, but I’m profiling Flynn, not libertarianism.) And so, in 1932, Flynn voted for Franklin Roosevelt for president and against Hoover, whom he sarcastically dubbed “the great Miracle Man.”

However, Flynn soon became disenchanted with Roosevelt’s New Deal, because of Wall Street-connected individuals appointed to positions by FDR, and because of several New Deal programs, including the NRA, which he saw as favoring big business. Flynn was also critical of New Deal deficit spending. He was not absolutely opposed to government spending, but he believed such spending should be paid for out of current government revenues, which could be increased by taxing industries and persons who had taken too large a share of the country’s income during the previous forty years. As for deficit spending to raise government revenues,

Flynn's daughter says (*op. cit.*, page 30), "He felt that eventually a steadily rising national debt would choke private investment by starving the small investor and cause income to be redistributed from the poor to the rich."

Flynn also came to agree with Socialist Party leader Norman Thomas that Roosevelt was "a born militarist." By 1936, he asserted that Roosevelt would "do his best to entangle us" in a coming European war. That year, Flynn voted for Norman Thomas for president as a protest against Roosevelt. Flynn came to believe that Roosevelt was working with conservative, big-business, Wall Street interests to bring about economic recovery based on war scares.

Flynn was influenced by Brandeis in regard to economics and politics. After World War I, Flynn's view of that war was influenced by Philip Gibbs's *Now It Can Be Told* and Harry Elmer Barnes's *The Genesis of the World War*, both of which criticized U. S. intervention in that war. Like many others in the 1930s, Flynn did not want to repeat that mistake in the next war. (One entertaining antiwar group of the 1930s was the college-based Veterans of Future Wars. Their salute was a hand held out to receive a veteran's pension. They argued that they should receive their pensions before the next war because they might be dead by the time it was over.)

To keep America out of the coming war, Flynn and several other intellectual noninterventionists founded the Keep America Out of War Congress in 1938. His collaborators included Oswald Garrison Villard, former editor of the *Nation*, Norman Thomas, who conceived the organization, and Harry Elmer Barnes.

In early 1941, Flynn became chairman of the New York City America First Committee (NYC-AFC). In this anti-interventionist endeavor, he was aided by Barnes, Thomas, Villard, Charles Beard, Sinclair Lewis, and many others. Perhaps the most famous supporter of America First was Charles Lindbergh. Another famous America Firster was the actress Lillian Gish, known from *Birth of a Nation* and other movies, who resigned from the organization after being blacklisted by the motion-picture studios. (That's right, kiddies. Those accused of being Communists are not the only ones who've ever been blacklisted in Hollywood.)

The AFC devoted much effort to noninterventionist propaganda. Flynn gave frequent speeches or radio addresses during 1941. He also wrote or edited all of the NYC-AFC's literature. This included a series of pamphlets about the war situation and the American economy. There was a weekly chapter newsletter, the *AFC Bulletin*, financed with Flynn's own money. And another antiwar weekly, *Uncensored*, was published by the NYC-AFC. The group also published a book, *We Testify*, with noninterventionist

opinions expressed by public figures such as Flynn, Amos Pinchot, Lindbergh, Norman Thomas, and Herbert Hoover, among others.

America First members and associates, including Flynn, Lindbergh, Pinchot, Thomas, and Charles Beard, testified at congressional committee hearings to oppose Roosevelt's legislative steps toward war, such as Lend-Lease, the Draft Extension bill of 1941, and the repeal of some sections of the Neutrality Act of 1939. America First also organized mass rallies in opposition to such measures. Unfortunately, Roosevelt won each of those legislative battles. (For a detailed account of Flynn's work with the AFC, see the aforementioned *An American First* by Michele Flynn Stenehjem.)

After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, America First closed up shop, and Flynn expressed support for the war effort. Indeed, when some former associates from the AFC and the Keep America Out of War Congress created a Peace Now organization to advocate negotiated peace, Flynn refused to participate. Supposedly, he personally supported negotiated peace, but, for some reason, believed such a movement was not proper during wartime. (So when would such a movement for a negotiated peace be proper? During peacetime? I must say that, on this point, I find Flynn's point of view perplexing.)

Although Flynn expressed support for the war effort, he was still concerned about America's ballooning national debt resulting from deficit spending for war, which he saw as a prelude to fascism. And so he wrote *As We Go Marching*, published in 1944, an analysis of the development of fascism in Italy and Germany, and of the trends in the U. S. which he saw as leading toward fascism. (Unlike some writers who have used "fascism" as a nebulous, undefined, all-purpose smear word, Flynn did define the term in detail.)

Flynn was also critical of Roosevelt's plans for a postwar global organization, which he derisively referred to as "globaloney."

Flynn became an early Pearl Harbor revisionist, perhaps even the first, with the publication of two controversial pamphlets, *The Truth about Pearl Harbor* (1944) and *The Final Secret of Pearl Harbor* (1945). (This latter title was later used by Admiral Robert Theobald for the title of his revisionist book on the Pearl Harbor attack.) In these two pamphlets, Flynn argued that Roosevelt knew in advance that the attack was coming, but allowed it to happen to inspire popular support for war. Flynn took credit for instigating a second congressional investigation of the attack in 1945 and 1946.

Flynn wrote *The Roosevelt Myth*, published in 1948. (A revised edition, even more critical of Roosevelt, appeared in 1956.) Although Flynn criti-

cized Roosevelt for policies leading toward fascism, he also criticized FDR for allowing Communist infiltration of his administration, though he did not believe Roosevelt to be a Communist himself. In other postwar writings, such as *While You Slept: Our Tragedy in Asia and Who Made It* (1951), Flynn criticized Roosevelt's "collusion" with Communists, which allegedly resulted in the "loss" of China. Meanwhile, at least as late as 1956, he still criticized deficit military spending, and predicted it would lead to the collapse of the economy and bring about fascism.

Although Flynn came to depend more and more on conservative backing for his postwar writings, he didn't always see eye to eye with conservatives. According to Ronald Radosh, in *Prophets on the Right: Profiles of Conservative Critics of American Globalism*, Flynn sent an article attacking the militarism racket to William Buckley, Jr., editor of *National Review*. Buckley rejected it.

In 1958, Flynn's health began to fail, and two years later he retired. He died in 1964.

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EDITORIAL

Perpetuating the Wartime Mythology

Richard A. Widmann

In July, Oscar-winning director Oliver Stone commented that Hitler's actions during World War Two should be put "into context." This comment along with the assertion that "Jewish domination of the media" has prevented an honest discussion about the Holocaust landed the "JFK" director in hot water. The comments occurred during an interview in which Stone was promoting his new Showtime television series, "The Secret History of America."

The incident itself demonstrates that a reconsideration of Hitler, the Holocaust or any aspect of the Nazi regime is verboten in the US and much of the world today. While Stone quickly issued an apology, the episode points up the difficulties faced by those who would seek to revise our understanding of World War Two.

Revisionist pioneer Harry Elmer Barnes commented in his "Revisionism: A Key to Peace":

"Any revisionist protests or corrections in relation the recent blatant and irresponsible Germanophobia are met by charges of anti-Semitism or an intention to 'rehabilitate' Hitler."

While this tactic has become an automatic but still-ugly reflex since Barnes made the assertion back in the 1960s (even Barnes has been charged with being anti-Semitic), the tactic was recently applied to Oliver Stone as well. His comments were denounced as "nauseating, anti-Semitic and racist." Barnes, using a slightly more veiled language than Stone, also commented,

"It has often been asserted that this historical blackout is today a sinister and deliberate plot to obstruct the truth and degrade history. This is undoubtedly the truth with respect to the program and activities of some minority groups and ideological organizations which have a special vested interest in perpetuating the wartime mythology."

While such a deliberate plot is a tremendous force aligned against revisionism, Barnes goes on to point out perhaps an even bigger obstacle:

"But, for the most part, it has become more the unconscious product of three decades of indoctrination and brainwashing that grew out of in-



Should Adolf Hitler be studied out of context?

terventionist and wartime propaganda. Even most professional historians who began their teaching career after 1937 have automatically come to accept as truth the distortions of prewar and wartime interventionism. The current blackout is as much an inevitable and automatic reaction to brainwashing as a perverse conspiracy.”

Indeed the effort to revise the history of World War Two is met with suspicion, ad-hominem attacks, threats, and even imprisonment. For all the trouble that one can find by questioning the wartime mythology, this pales by comparison with the opposition which is met when reconsidering the Holocaust.

With this subject, the generally pejorative label “revisionist” is replaced by the heretical “denier.” The psychological impact of the term “Holocaust denier,” long and relentlessly inculcated in the public mind since its constituent minds were young, immediately signals the audience that the one charged is devious, vindictive, hateful and possibly even criminal, obviating all questions including the crucial one of guilt.

If World War Two shattered more lives than any other event down to the present day, should it not be subject to the historian’s magnifying glass? While it has become fairly commonplace to revise the heroic stature of figures in American history such as Columbus, Washington, Jefferson, and even Lincoln, the figures of the Second World War remain immutable in the mythology that has been constructed around them. While the Allied

figures like Churchill and Roosevelt have been the target of some healthy skepticism, the villains of the piece, Hitler and Mussolini, are rarely allowed an exculpatory word.

Few today would look upon other events of the Twentieth Century in terms of purely good and evil. The generation that grew up during the Vietnam era commonly questioned the activities of its government for reasons both abundant and clear. Today, even the tragic events of 9/11 and the Iraq and Afghanistan wars are fair game to the media and the general public. Only World War Two remains painted in strictly moral terms.

As we study history we try to place it in context. Doing so is an indispensable process for grasping ancient history, the Bible, the Founding Fathers, and just about any other historical event you can recall. In fact studying such events “out of context” is laughable even on the surface. But clearly a call to put Hitler “into context” is unacceptable. The mythology of the Second World War apparently does support, and is indeed propped up by a special interest. If it were not, would there be laws subjecting those who express disbelief to prison?

In this issue of INCONVENIENT HISTORY we turn a dissident eye to several aspects of the mythology of the Second World War. In our feature story, Editorial advisor Joseph Bellinger reveals the little known story of the liberation of the infamous concentration camp at Bergen-Belsen. We are also happy to publish the third installment of Thomas Kues’s Chronicle of Holocaust Revisionism series bringing this classic piece of historiography up to 1960. Researcher Paul Grubach provides a lengthy analysis of Susannah Heschel’s theology and focuses on the little discussed topic of Christianity in National Socialist Germany. Joseph Bishop returns to this issue by asking several unanswered questions about the Katyn Forest massacre. The issue is rounded out by reviews of Dalton’s *Debating the Holocaust* and Longerich’s *Holocaust: The Nazi Persecution and Murder of the Jews* as well as a new biographical profile of libertarian and revisionist Murray Rothbard.

PAPERS

The Lethal Liberation of Bergen-Belsen

Joseph Bellinger

"[...] men fell sick by thousands, and lacking care and aid, almost all died. In the morning their bodies were found at the doors of the houses where they had expired during the night. It reached the point where no further account was taken of a dying man than is today taken of the merest cattle. —Boccaccio on the Black Plague"

"I've just seen a terrible sight—there's a camp down the road, with thousands of people dying!"¹

The commandant of Belsen, Josef Kramer, was a bull of a man, with thick wrists, a stout neck, and massive hands. Kramer cut such an imposing figure that the British executioner, hangman Henry Pierpoint, was a bit wary of him when he was first brought out from his cell in order to measure him for the death trap.² And yet his looks belied his basically conflicted and morose nature. After his capture and incarceration, Kramer, understandably depressed and despondent, spoke with a British correspondent. In an effusion of self-pity and genuine sentimentality, he kept remarking on how much he missed his wife and children, "with whom he used to romp in the garden of his Belsen home." (He loved flowers, especially roses). "Mused Kramer, "I love my wife and children. I love all children. I believe in God."³

However, in April 1945, God was nowhere to be found in Belsen, which gave every appearance of being the anteroom to hell, with Kramer playing the unwanted and unenviable role of Cerberus.

In fact, it appears to have been merely a bad stroke of luck which placed Kramer at Belsen in the closing months of 1944.⁴

A report on the conditions found at Belsen upon liberation was recorded by a correspondent writing for the *London Illustrated News*:⁵

"Nothing that Dante could conceive of the Inferno we term Hell can exceed in agony the ghastly scenes at Belsen concentration camp, near Bremen, which was taken over on April 17 by General Dempsey's Second Army. This huge camp, which had contained some 60,000 civilians, was little more than a mass of dead and dying, mainly from starvation,

typhus, and typhoid. The camp was declared a neutral area before we arrived and the Allied military authorities stood by to reach it at the earliest possible moment, for it was known that the living had been without food or water for over six days. It was found to be littered with dead and dying, and huts capable of housing only thirty persons were in many cases crowded with as many as 500. It was impossible to estimate the number of dead among them; while frequently being too weak to move, they had been suffocated, while those still living were also too feeble to remove them."

An article published in the *London Illustrated News* noted:⁶

"There was a pile between 60 and 80 yards long, 30 yards wide and 4 ft. high, of the naked bodies of women in full view of the living, including some 500 children, whose crime, like most of the others, was that they were Jewish-born. There were bunk accommodations for only 474 women out of 1704 acute typhus, dysentery and tuberculosis cases, and 18,600 women who should have been in hospital were lying on hard, bare, bug-ridden boards. The men's situation was little better. Women in the so-called hospital, lying on bare boards, were so feeble that they could hardly raise themselves on their arms to cheer their rescuers. Mostly they died directly or indirectly of starvation. Food was distributed by block leaders who were supposed to organize matters and get food from the cook-house to the compounds. Those too weak to move died of starvation. So terrible was the situation that the prison doctors told General Dempsey's senior medical officer that cannibalism was going on. The commandant, said the doctor, 'was a typical German brute—a sadistical, heavy-featured Nazi. He was quite unashamed.' He was subsequently arrested. Food sent by the Red Cross to Jewish inmates had not been distributed. The revelations of Belsen and other camps have horrified the entire civilized world."

This report, however, was not entirely accurate. Belsen actually consisted of five different camps, all established at different times.

Camp 1 was known as the "Star Camp," where the original contingent of prisoners was housed. Entire families were housed in this section of the camp. Most of these inmates were in relatively good health when they were liberated. The Star Camp consisted of some 18 large wooden huts, and housed some 4,400 so-called "exchange Jews," of which the Dutch were the most prominent, numbering some 3,600 souls. The inmates housed in this area were not required to wear the usual striped concentration camp uniform with which the world is by now so familiar. The occupants were

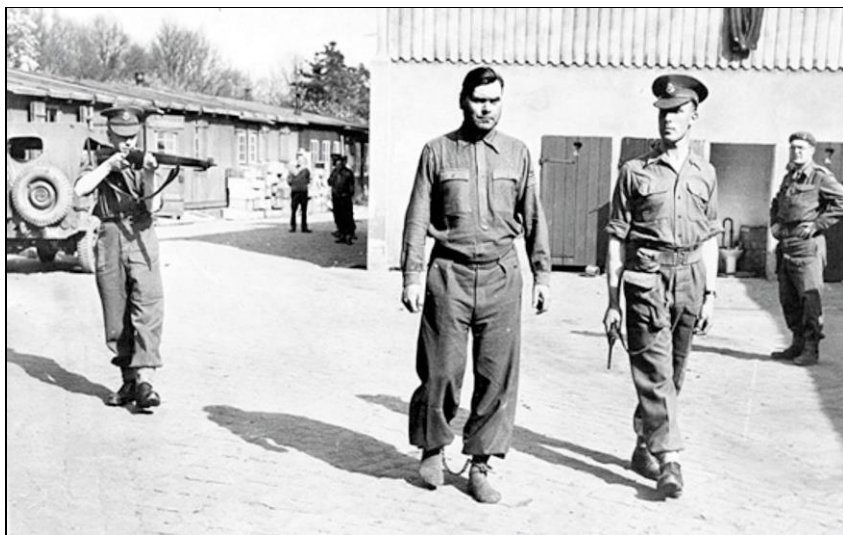
obliged to wear a large Jewish Star on their clothing, thus the appellation, "Star Camp." This camp was ostensibly administered by a council of Jewish elders. The men and women were housed separately, but families were allowed to visit together during daylight hours. The inmates had also received permission from the camp authorities to write letters to friends and relatives, although all correspondence was strictly censored. All inmates were obliged to work in the so-called "*Schuh-kommando*," where they were expected to either repair or take apart old shoes, which were subsequently recycled for later use by the Germans. Out of the 18 huts, two were reserved as a sick bay.

Camp 2 was known as the "*Häftlinge*," or general prisoner, compound and upon the day of liberation was the largest of all the camp compounds. All atrocity reports concerning conditions in Belsen are descriptions of this section of the camp, which is where tens of thousands of seriously ill inmates were dumped during the closing months of the war. Prior to February 1944, prisoners in this camp were required to wear the striped concentration camp uniform, and were treated rather harshly, in accordance with provisions established by the concentration camp administrative offices.

Camp 3 was the so-called "Neutrals Camp," where several hundred Jews from neutral states, such as Spain, Turkey, and Argentina, and Portugal were housed. Due to their special status, these inmates were relatively well taken care of by the SS administration. Prior to March 1944, the occupants had been provided with plentiful amounts of food and also received the added bonus of an exemption from work details. This area also was in more or less deplorable condition on the day of liberation.

Camp 4 was designated the "Tent Camp," and was located directly behind the "Star Camp." Accommodations for these unfortunate people consisted of twelve large tents which had been erected in August 1944, when the Reich began moving thousands of female prisoners westward from camps in the East. The first large transport of female prisoners that arrived at Belsen had been transferred from Auschwitz and Warsaw sometime between August and November 1944, and were interned in this section of the camp. Eventually these tents were completely destroyed during a furious wind storm which occurred on November 7 and 8, after which the women were either transferred to the Star Camp or sent on to work camps in northern Germany.

Camp 5, the "Hungarian Camp," was established in July 1944 and consisted of two large huts. Conditions in this section of the camp were good, relatively speaking. As in the "Star Camp" the inmates housed here were allowed to wear their own clothing, to which a Star of David was attached.



Josef Kramer, Belsen camp commandant, photographed in leg-irons 17 April 1945. Source: Imperial War Museum (BU 3749). Photo is in the public domain.

These people were also exempt from work requirements and were spared the dreaded roll call, which was obligatory in other sections of the camp. It was from this camp that Himmler arranged for an exchange of Hungarian Jews in 1944.⁷

In all of these camp sections, SS staff members were rarely, if ever, to be seen. This was not unusual, for camp directives required that the SS keep a “safe distance” between themselves and the inmates, for security and health reasons. The actual day-to-day administration of the camps was left to the tender mercies of the so-called “*Kapos*,” who were charged by the SS with keeping “order” amongst the inmates.

Prior to the catastrophic conditions resulting from the carnage of war in March 1945, conditions within the camp had been at least minimally tolerable. Sometime in 1944 the name of the camp had been changed from “Detention Camp” to “Recuperation Camp,” but, rather amazingly, daily life in the “Detention Camp” was preferable compared to the horrific conditions prevalent throughout the camp in March-April 1945. According to an extremely detailed article published in *After the Battle* magazine:⁸

“Daily life in the ‘Detention Camp’ was harsh, but tolerable. The average daily ration consisted of coffee in the morning, 1.5 litres of soup at noon and, if available, 200-300 grammes of bread in the afternoon. Sometimes there would be a little jam or butter, or a small slice of sausage or cheese. A roll call was held every day at 3 p.m. which could last

from one to five hours. In spite of a lapse of social and moral values—marked by petty quarrels, egoism, theft—many tried to uphold some sort of standard by engaging in cultural, educational and religious activities. Meanwhile, everyone lived in the hope that they might be released abroad and regain freedom.”

Nevertheless, other testimonies were soon to emerge regarding the all-too-real bestial conditions uncovered in the camp shortly after liberation. One observer wrote:⁹

“When I was there the Germans were still in command, because we only had a handful of fellows—I mean, we couldn’t have run the thing. They had been feeding them by boiling up potatoes still in their hessian sacks, not washed, or anything. Then they would trundle barrows around, and heave a sack through the window of each hut, and the inmates would scramble for them. Some of them were so weak that when we went in there we had a job to tell the living from the dead. Skeletons, they were [...]. The inmates nearly all had typhus, so the main job was to get enough medics in there, and DDT, and things like that. On the first occasion I went in like a lamb to the slaughter, the next time I went in I was stopped at the gate, and a fellow with a great big puffer of DDT put it down my neck and up my trouser legs, because the whole place was swarming with lice. The smell was the worst; you couldn’t get it out of your nostrils for days.”

Another eyewitness, John Pine, described only as a “visitor” to Belsen, spoke of his experiences at the infamous camp:¹⁰

“[...] if I shut my eyes and think about it I can still recall in my nostrils the stench of the human flesh that was still about. There were masses of what were obviously human bones, there were the crematoria, there was a vast amount of ash. And then one saw the sleeping- and indeed, living-quarters of the inmates of the camp. They were sort of bunks, with very little head room indeed, and to my recollection there were three, four, and even five bunks one on top of the other. And there were all the signs of the human excreta which had dropped down from bunk to bunk. Looking at it, it really made one feel [...] it revolted one, and yet it made one feel so humble [...] how ghastly the whole thing was, and at the same time one had the smell in one’s nostrils, and one could see where all these heaps of naked dead bodies had been piled up on top of the other like a whole lot of dead animals’ carcasses. It was a very humbling experience [...]. I don’t think we spent more than two or three hours there; a most interesting experience [...].”

Appendix "O" to Chapter VII of British Second Army History deals extensively with the Belsen Camp and the following extracts are taken from it:¹¹

"Disease of all kinds was rife and in a vast number of cases it was difficult to tell which condition predominated—whether it was typhus, starvation, tubercle, or a combination of all three [...]. Conditions in the huts were indescribable. [...] the appalling sanitary conditions in which excreta from those too weak to move or help themselves fouled the rooms or trickled through from upper bunks to those below [...]. Latrines were practically non-existent and what there were consisted simply of a bare pole over a deep trench without any screening [...]. There had been no water for about a week owing to damage by shell fire to the electrical pumping equipment on which the system depended. Food was of poor quality and the number of meals varied from one to three per day."

In fact, since Belsen was classified as "an "unproductive" camp, where inmates were not forced to work, they (the Nazis) thought it a good idea to send others there who had outlived their "economic usefulness." So, Belsen became "a dumping ground for ill, sick, starved and emaciated slave laborers."¹²

Three Jewish men were among the first British soldiers who entered the liberated camp on April 15, 1944.¹³

Among these liberators was Captain Derek Sington, a young man working for British Intelligence at the time these events occurred.¹⁴ Sington appears to have been one of the designated senior officials to first enter Belsen. His written account of the camp's liberation indicates that he acted with authority and decisiveness when initially confronting the camp commander, Josef Kramer, who was waiting just outside of the main camp to greet and escort the British troops upon arrival.

According to Sington's account, the Germans had made overtures to his commanding officer seeking to surrender the camp intact. An agreement was reached whereby a small contingent of guards, mainly comprised of Hungarians employed in the service of the Wehrmacht, would remain at the camp site to maintain order, along with a smaller contingent of about fifty SS staff-members and employees, retained for purely administrative purposes. It was implicitly understood that, once the surrender and transfer of the camp were completed, these units were to be allowed to pass on to the German lines without further molestation. Unfortunately for Kramer and his staff, events and emotions were soon to render that agreement null and void.

Sington had been sent on ahead by his commanding officer, Colonel Taylor, with instructions to drive forward, escorted by a column of tanks, and enter the camp proper. Upon arrival, he set up a public address system, from which he announced the liberation of the camp. Aware of the typhus outbreak in the camp, Sington also informed the inmates that, although they were technically liberated, they were to remain within the camp compound due to the outbreak of typhus. Furthermore, they were informed that the Hungarian guards would remain behind to maintain order and prevent any attempts by the inmates to leave the camp. "But," writes Sington, "they were to be assured that food and medical aid were being rushed up with all possible speed."¹⁵

As Sington's column approached the outer perimeter of the camp, they were met by two former inmates, who were part of a group of six hundred which had been hustled out of the camp by the SS. They had managed to detach themselves from the column and dart into a nearby wooded area, where they remained concealed until the whirring sound of British tanks lured them out of their hiding places. Sington conferred briefly with the two escapees, who informed him that he would soon be approaching the Belsen "neutral zone," which was prominently marked with white notices reading:

"Danger! Typhus!"

Within five minutes, Sington reached the cordoned off area, where he was approached by two minor emissaries from the camp. One of them, a green-clad German lance-corporal, simply handed him a note which read: "Allied Commander, do pay attention!" Sington pocketed the note and proceeded in the direction of the camp, which soon loomed up before him as he rounded a small bend in the road. The camp was now in sight, the entrance to which was marked by a rather crude single pole stretching across the roadway, with huts formed up in rows across either side. Sington was met by Commandant Kramer, who jumped onto the running board of his vehicle and saluted. Dispensing with formalities, Sington asked him how many prisoners were currently being held in the camp. Kramer gave a figure of 40,000, plus an additional 15,000 in Camp number 2, which was further up the road. When asked what types of prisoners were being held in confinement there, Kramer replied, "Habitual criminals, felons, and homosexuals."¹⁶

As Sington's column proceeded deeper into the foul recesses of the main prisoner compound, he was immediately struck by the overpowering smell of ordure, which he described as being similar to the smell in a

“monkey house.”¹⁷ A bluish mist had formed and was hovering above the ground and between the buildings, which lent an eerie aspect to the incredible scene unfolding before his stunned eyes. In the midst of this surreal atmosphere, “simian” (sic) throngs of inmates soon began forming throughout the camp, hobbling about lethargically in the customary striped uniform of a concentration camp inmate. A weak cry of jubilation arose from hundreds of lips as the loudspeakers announced that the day of liberation had at last arrived. As Sington surveyed the incredible scene unfolding before his eyes, one man stood out amidst the multitude—he was standing in front of the gateway to one of the compounds dressed in a regular blue suit! The man was of imposing stature and his flaming red hair stood out dramatically amidst the shaven heads which were ubiquitous throughout the camp. Sington, struck by this singularly odd apparition, approached the man and shook hands with him. The man introduced himself as a Dutchman who had once fought with the “International Brigade” in Spain, and was now a self-described icon within the concentration camp system.

As Sington fought to hold back tears, he strode back to his vehicle and, still accompanied by Kramer, plunged deeper into the foul underbelly of the camp. By this time, the masses of inmates were fully aroused and began surging past the barbed wire enclosures into the main thoroughfare of the camp. At this point, Kramer suddenly leaned toward Sington and remarked, “Now the tumult is beginning.”

As the mobs swelled in size and pressed forward, one of the guards began firing his rifle above the crowd. Sington, alarmed that he might fire into the mass of surging inmates, rushed up to the soldier and ordered him at gunpoint to cease firing. Too late, however, for the firing provoked an instinctual response from the “Kapos,” or “orderlies,” who, armed with cudgels, plunged determinedly into the mass of writhing inmates, striking, beating, and flaying the amorphous mass where they stood, knocking them to the ground like so many dominoes or rag dolls. To Sington’s horror, the Kapos continued to inflict blow after blow upon those who were already lying on the ground; in fact, the Kapos struck so hard at the defenseless inmates that their bodies bent and cracked with the force of the blows.

Sington initially believed that the mob which had formed was heading toward his column to greet them as liberators, but soon discovered that their actual objective was directed toward the food stores. Women in the crowd began echoing the cry, “Deliver us!, Deliver us!” The hysterical women mobbed Sington’s vehicle, crying and wailing the torments of the damned, their cries overpowering the powerful sound system. A shower of leaves and twigs rained upon the vehicle as an expression of gratitude. One

of these twigs happened to land on the shoulder of Kramer, who impatiently flicked it off with his fingers. As Sington's vehicle retreated back toward the main camp, he turned to Kramer and said, "You've made a fine hell here." To which Kramer simply replied, "It has become one in the last few days."

Sington left Kramer at the entrance of the camp and rushed on to advise Colonel Taylor of the conditions existing there. Within minutes Sington arrived at the administrative offices of a Panzer Training School located a half mile up from the Belsen camp, where Taylor was at that very moment negotiating the peaceful surrender of the camp with two impeccably dressed German Wehrmacht colonels. Before Sington could interject a word into the conversation, a British medical officer rushed in and announced, "There have been some casualties down at the concentration camp." The telephone suddenly rang, and one of the German officers picked up the receiver and took the message. Placing the receiver back on the hook, he turned to the assembled men and announced, "It appears that a loud-speaker went into the camp and that it has started a disturbance."¹⁸

Colonel Taylor immediately asked the German colonel, "Who is causing casualties in the camp? Under the agreement only SS *administrative* personnel may be in the camp and they should be unarmed."

The German colonel shrugged his shoulders and replied, "They may have pistols."¹⁹

Irritated by this response, Colonel Taylor impatiently ordered the two Wehrmacht colonels to accompany him to the camp immediately. Sington, the doctor, and the two Wehrmacht colonels climbed into the vehicle along with Colonel Taylor. Kramer was still dutifully standing at the entrance to the camp, awaiting their arrival. As the small group alighted from the vehicle, Kramer walked up briskly toward them and saluted. Taylor ignored the salute and turned to Sington, barking, "Tell him that all SS must hand in their arms within half-an-hour." Kramer, taken aback, replied, "Without arms I can't be responsible for the camp."²⁰

"No," responded Taylor, "but you can show the British officers how it's administered."

Kramer, however, sensing a possible danger to his person, adamantly refused to enter the camp unarmed, to which Taylor responded, "In that case tell him he can keep his arms for the present but that for every inmate of the camp who is shot one SS man will be executed."²¹

Sington asked Kramer why he needed to carry arms in the camp, to which Kramer responded, "To protect the food stores." Upon inquiring as to the available food stocks remaining in the camp, Sington was told by

Kramer that there was enough food left for two days, consisting of turnip soup for morning and dinner meals, and bread "as often as possible." Water availability was virtually nonexistent, for, as Kramer explained, the camp was dependent upon the main at Hannover, which had been completely cut off by the bombing. The only water currently available in the camp, he continued, was contained in four large reservoirs of stagnant water.

Colonel Taylor interrupted and ordered Kramer to escort the entire group to his office, whereupon Kramer led them to one of the huts inside the main camp. Once inside, Kramer affably offered all the men a seat, while he sat down at his own desk, casually slinging one leg over the edge of his chair and tipping his peaked cap up along the top of his forehead. Colonel Taylor was most anxious to lay hands upon all the official records relating to the history of the camp and ordered the commandant to produce them forthwith.

"They have all been destroyed," Kramer replied.

"On whose authority?," countered Taylor.

"That of the *Hauptwirtschaftsamt* in Berlin."

Astounded and disappointed, Taylor asked, "Are there none left?"

"Perhaps 2,000 (files)," responded Kramer.

"Then get the 2,000 at once."

Kramer complied by calling in his adjutant and ordering him to produce the files demanded by Taylor. Unfortunately, the adjutant returned a few minutes later and reported that no records at all could be found. The destruction of files and documents had been complete. Little time was left for any further discussion, as an orderly burst into the office in a panic, shouting, "The kitchens are being stormed!"

Taylor, Kramer, and the rest of the oddly assorted group scampered away in the direction of the kitchens, accompanied now by Brigadier General Glyn Hughes, who was Chief Medical Officer of the British 2nd Army. Kramer and the German Army Colonel led the way, while Taylor and his retinue, comprised of some ten men, followed directly behind. Shots were heard in the distance as the inmates began cheering "God save the King!"

At the far end of the main thoroughfare stood the object which elicited such panic in the orderly: the so-called "kitchen," which in reality was simply a long wooden shed furnished with thirty large cauldrons. Expecting to run headlong into a full-scale riot, Sington was surprised to find only the SS supervisor standing in the "kitchen" glaring ominously into one of the cauldrons. Sington remarked quite audibly,

"I see no storming going on here."

Whereupon the SS supervisor completely removed the lid of the steaming kettle full of rotting turnips and pointed into it, drawing attention to the fact that the level of the "soup" was a foot below what it should be. "All that has been taken," he exclaimed.

"And you call that "storming the kitchen?" replied Sington, who then dutifully scribbled the man's name down as a "trouble-maker" for future reference.

"Is this the extent of your "riot"? demanded Sington of Kramer.

Completely nonplussed, Kramer replied, "No, there's also been an attack on the potato field." Sington demanded that Kramer take the group there immediately. Dusk was beginning to fall when Kramer, Sington, and the rest of the group arrived at the potato patch. Kramer immediately pointed to an emaciated female inmate scrounging about in the dirt for a potato or two. "You see what I mean?" Kramer pointedly asked.²²

Unbeknownst to Kramer, he was within minutes of becoming an "inmate" himself. General Hughes drew the group's attention to an inmate lying on the ground, blood streaming down his face. "That fellow's in a bad way. He ought to be got onto a stretcher."

Sington agreed, and ordered an SS man to procure a stretcher immediately. The order turned out to be completely unnecessary, for the inmate began screaming and writhing along the ground, and soon ceased movement altogether. He was dead. Emotion and patience began to wear thin among the small British contingent as they encountered one dead body after another as they moved through the camp.²³ One of the British sergeants accompanying the group suggested to Sington, "Why shouldn't Kramer carry one of these people away?" Sington stared hard at the commandant and then ordered, "Pick up that man and take him to the hospital!"

Kramer balked at the order and stepped back, undoubtedly thinking that this was an illegal order contrary to the agreed terms of surrender. Sington menacingly removed his revolver from his holster and pointed it directly at Kramer, ordering him again to "Pick up that man!" As Kramer stepped forward and stooped down to scoop up the prostrate inmate, Sington jabbed his revolver hard into the small of Kramer's back. Kramer stumbled off in the direction of the camp hospital carrying the wounded prisoner, followed closely by Sington. If there had been any doubt in Kramer's mind concerning his ultimate fate, such doubts were surely laid to rest at this moment.²⁴

By the time Kramer returned to the potato patch, the entire field was swarming with female inmates. British soldiers had to urge them to return

to their huts with rather emphatic gestures. Soon little fires began glowing throughout the prisoner compound, casting an eerie glow in the gathering darkness. Sington turned to Kramer and asked what they could possibly be using for fuel. Kramer replied, "Their huts." This answer puzzled Sington, and he asked, "Why?" "Freedom," answered Kramer. "Soon," he predicted, "the whole camp will be ablaze."

Having lost patience with Kramer and his self-vindicating comments, an irate Lt. Colonel Taylor ordered him shackled and placed under arrest. Shortly thereafter Kramer was roughly pushed into an underground cellar into a small cell located below the officers quarters. The walls and floor of the tiny cell were covered with a malodorous slime due to the fact that the room had previously been used to store fish. The stench was appalling and there was no light. For Kramer's "meal" a guard laughingly tossed a small raw potato no larger than a crab apple through a small aperture in the door every 48 hours. Under such abominable conditions of confinement, Kramer soon became a nervous and physical wreck. According to the recollection of one witness who saw him at the time, "His nerve was going by the end of the third day. When I went in, he jumped to his feet and put his hands over his face. He expected to be hanged every time the door opened."²⁵

On the morning following Kramer's arrest, Sington drove into the SS compound and was surprised to see scores of healthy appearing female inmates thronging together, "gaily and smartly dressed, [...] talking in groups or carrying packages and blankets into or out of the huts."²⁶ Many of these women were young and robust Jewesses who had recently entered the camp from Auschwitz-Birkenau. The women were exuberant, as they had just looted the camp warehouses and SS storerooms during the night and early morning hours. A number of them were wearing SS uniforms.

Encouraged by this vision of exhilaration and rejoicing, Sington drove on through the SS compound and halted his vehicle in front of the prisoner compound in Camp 1. Loudspeakers affixed to his vehicle bellowed out the following message repeatedly in various languages:²⁷

"The Germans have nothing more to do with this camp. The camp is now under control of the British army. Food and medical aid are being rushed up immediately. Obey our orders and instructions. By so doing you will help us and it is the best way by which you can help yourselves."

Sington was astounded to be approached by a man who exclaimed, "I am English."²⁸ The man was placed in the front seat of the vehicle and driven

to the main entrance of the camp, where he was quickly spirited out by British Intelligence Officers.²⁹

For Sington, however, the day was just beginning. It was time to deal with the small contingent of SS who had volunteered or were ordered to remain behind as assistants to Kramer and the Allied forces, per the arrangement agreed upon by the negotiators. They were soon to rue the day they had ever consented to remain behind.

Sington and a heavily armed band of British regulars stormed into the SS administrative offices, barking orders to the surprised SS men. One of them, a rather seedy looking man with puppy-dog eyes and a nervous disposition, began to cry when informed that he and his assistants were under arrest. His name was *Hauptsturmfuehrer* Franz Hoessler, who had formerly served under Kramer at Birkenau. Hoessler was ordered to accompany Sington, who demanded that he be shown the kitchen facilities. As they proceeded together along the corridor, Hoessler continued to weep profusely, reiterating over and over again, "I have a wife and two little children." Sington was unmoved, and merely asked him, "Why did you join the SS?" Hoessler replied that in 1933 he was unemployed. "What was your trade?" queried Sington. "I was a photographer," Hoessler replied.

As they entered the kitchen, Hoessler, clearly unnerved and possessing a presentiment as to what would soon happen to him and his colleagues, continued to weep unabashedly.³⁰ Clearly, this was a man who could be easily broken. "I have always done my best for the prisoners," mumbled Hoessler. "My camp at Dora was a fine camp. I had everything there, playing fields." Hoessler looked about helplessly and centered his gaze on the cook in the kitchen. "Wasn't my camp at Dora a model camp?" he asked in a pathetically pleading voice. "Oh yes, Dora was a fine camp," the cook replied. Sington was unimpressed with this testimonial. "Don't you understand that you have been working for years in a criminal organization?" he asked. Hoessler only bawled the louder. Disgusted, Sington walked out into the compound, where he observed a Hungarian sentry striking one of the inmates for plundering food stocks. Sington rushed upon the Hungarian, disarmed him of his stick, and broke it over his knee. Trying to reason with the inmates, Sington ordered them to get back from his car, and called for reinforcements. Only after shouting repeated threats and brandishing their firearms were they able to drive off the starving, marauding inmates.

Having deflected this particular incident, Sington turned his attention once again to the SS. Twenty SS men were escorted under arrest to Block 72. As there was space for at least one hundred other people in the block, Sington attempted to place gypsies in the same holding tank as the SS. The

gypsies, however, demurred, claiming that it was unfair to place them in the same detention room with the SS. "After all," one of them remarked, "we also are human beings."

By this time, events in the camp were beginning to take a very definite turn for the worse. As Sington walked back into the camp, a young lad rushed up to him and shouted excitedly, "There have been seven murders!" Sington, led by the boy, rushed off to the site to view the carnage for himself. Sure enough, seven corpses were lying about the compound. Their trousers and underclothing had been stripped from their bodies and they lay in the dirt, covered only by a nightshirt. Their faces were unrecognizable, as they had been mutilated and beaten into a bloody pulp. A number of skulls and jaws had been smashed in due to the savagery of the attackers, who apparently had pummeled these unfortunates into a faceless glob.

"Who are these men?," asked Sington.

The response came quickly: *Kapos*.

And so it went throughout the day, rushing from one atrocity to another. Encouraged by the presence of the British, the inmates soon discarded all restraint, and indulged every suppressed whim which had been forbidden them by the SS and their cruel taskmasters. Indiscriminate sexual intercourse was carried on openly and unashamedly throughout the camp. Even the British were reduced to firing off rounds every thirty seconds to drive the masses away from the remaining food stores. "We've been doing this all night, sir," remarked one of the men. "It's not the slightest use, they're taking everything they fancy."

In the meanwhile, an enraged Lt. Colonel Taylor ordered Kramer dragged out of his cell and driven about the compound. During this time, Kramer was subjected to further physical and verbal abuse as he was dragged to the site of a large mass grave. The scene was later described by a war correspondent who was present at the time:³¹

"He stood there, this colossus of a man, his eyes unwinking, his face expressionless. The BGS, VII Corps, turned a white face to the interpreter. 'Tell him,' he said venomously, 'that when he hangs I hope he hangs slowly.' The interpreter translated. Kramer was unmoved. The BGS turned to the military policemen and told them he would hold them personally responsible if Kramer committed suicide. Captain Kirk pointed out that the cord tying the camouflage jacket round the waist would make a good rope. The BGS ordered his men to strip Kramer to the waist and remove his braces and his boots. Hobbling over the sharp gravel, his great fat stomach and back naked to the wind, Kramer made his way to the Jeep, the crowds of women whom he had treated so vilely

clapping and dancing and making little hoarse whispering sounds as they tried to cheer."

The night raids reached a climax on the night of April 15th, when mobs of inmates stormed into the remaining food stores, and plundered whatever food stocks remained. Not even the presence of a Sherman tank deterred them from their goal. By morning, only a few sacks of flour and hard loaves of black bread remained scattered along the floor. Perhaps the most bizarre sight was that of a group of Russians and Poles who had broken into Kramer's private livestock pens. The inmates had gone berserk, garroting and stabbing the twenty-five pigs remaining in the sty. Their squeals and grunts of agony resounded throughout the compound. It took less than one day for the plundering inmates to completely strip a massive SS clothing compound down to its bare boards.

The lack of water in the camp was an immediate threat to be reckoned with. The camp, due to the British bombing of the water main in Hannover, had been without fresh flowing water for about a week. As a result, the inmates had been compelled to resort to the massive concrete reservoirs of water reserved for emergency use by the commandant. Unfortunately, the water inside these reservoirs was completely befouled, as many inmates had thrown filth, rags, and even corpses into the tanks, or simply collapsed in them while trying to assuage their gnawing thirst. A temporary solution was to be provided by an SS man named Steinmetz, who suggested that a lorry be dispatched to the Wehrmacht headquarters in order to obtain a pump for emergency use. Steinmetz apparently seized upon an opportunity to exonerate himself with his captors, for he immediately protested, "I am purely a technician in this camp [...]."³²

Steinmetz's plan was to pump in water from the nearby river Meisse, which ran alongside the camp at a distance of only a few hundred yards. The British commandeered a small work platoon of SS men and civilians and ordered them down to the river to implement the plan.³³ On the way toward the river, Steinmetz grasped his opportunity and protested that he had nothing to do with what went on within the camp. He also took the occasion to denounce his comrades to the British, telling them that a number of them were planning to escape, and offered to continue feeding them information in the future. The British accepted his proposal of betrayal with gratitude.

Within hours, water was being pumped into the camp from the river, but the British were soon to learn that their troubles were far from over. Thousands of inmates continued to drop like flies, and the British medical authorities were at a loss for a solution. The camp was still covered

throughout with vast mounds of excreta, and the stench of urine and vomit pervaded the entire length and breadth of the massive compound. Undeniably, superseding Kramer's authority was an unenviable inheritance indeed. For in spite of every attempt to ameliorate the lot of the inmates, they continued to drop dead by the thousands. It was estimated that some 28,000 inmates died after the liberation of the camp by the British.³⁴

Clearly, however, with such enormous death rates and world opinion clamoring for justice and action, responsible parties as well as scapegoats would have to be found to answer for the detestable state of affairs in the Belsen compound.³⁵

On the morning of April 18th, after having spent five days and nights in a vile underground cellar enveloped in total darkness, Josef Kramer was taken out of his cell and prepared for transfer out of the camp. The former commandant was manhandled and shackled, both hands and legs. The shackles were much too small for his enormous wrists and cut gaping gashes into his flesh³⁶. Kramer was then prodded into a jeep, his shirt ripped from his back, and paraded throughout the camp half-naked, to the accompaniment of jeers, hooting, catcalls, and a resonant howling which sounded to one witness as a "terrifying blend of joy and hate."³⁷ Insults and accusations were not the only items thrown at Kramer. Whatever object the inmates could lay their hands on was thrown at Kramer as he crouched as low as he could in the vehicle, trying to avoid any potentially damaging missiles. Two British soldiers were poised directly behind Kramer, constantly prodding him in the spine with their sten guns, which was a cause for great jubilation among the gleeful inmates, and provoked them to howling with "joy and hate." After he had been duly exposed to the contempt and wrath of the inmates, Kramer was driven out of the compound, amidst a hail of garbage and debris, never to return.³⁸

Kramer's staff was to suffer a much worse fate than this. Two days after Kramer's departure, the remainder of the SS staff were rounded up and arrested. Their anguish was undoubtedly magnified by the fact that of the 300-odd SS guards once stationed at the Belsen camp, only these 50 captured men and women were now to bear the brunt of the Allies' thirst for vengeance and the public's outcry for justice.³⁹

The British immediately formed them into burial squads which were driven around the camp on a truck for eight hours a day, picking up hundreds of decomposing, infectious corpses and slinging them onto the flatbed and then dumping them into mass graves. If the trucks were too loaded down with corpses, the SS men and women were made to sit on top of them. The truck was escorted by a tank, in case any of the SS had thoughts

about jumping off. Crowds of cheering inmates would form at the edges of the graves in order to howl, ridicule, and heap execrations upon the despised SS staff and their female assistants.

Not content with hurling insults, the inmates soon took to hurling bricks at their former overseers. On one occasion, their aim failed, and the brick hit the British sentry guarding them straight on the jaw, which apparently knocked him out. Often the inmates, encouraged by the sentries, would kick and strike the SS.

One eyewitness to these scenes of brutality noted:⁴⁰

"Enraged by the enormous piles of corpses of Germans and other political prisoners who had died of typhoid, the result of panic and neglect, they first beat the guards and then ordered them to collect the bodies."

Another witness commented upon how viciously the former female SS-Aufseherinnen were treated:⁴¹

"all day long, always running, men and women alike, from the death pile to the death pit, with the stringy remains of their victims over their shoulders. When one of them dropped to the ground with exhaustion, he was beaten with a rifle butt. When another stopped for a break, she was kicked until she ran again, or prodded with a bayonet, to the accompaniment of lewd shouts and laughs. When one tried to escape or disobeyed an order, he was shot."

The female inmates were much worse in their vindictiveness than the males, according to witnesses. They howled and screeched and screamed obscenities while encouraging the guards to fire upon the hapless SS. If one happened to be shot, they broke out in gales of applause and laughter. This psychological curiosity was duly noted by Caiger-Smith, who wrote:⁴²

"Women prisoners kept inciting British guards to shoot down the exhausted SS men in order to avenge those among the prisoners who had lost relatives to the Nazi persecution."

Two such horrifying incidents were duly recorded by Derrick Sington, who was an eyewitness to these events. He writes:⁴³

"The burial lorry was clearing corpses from the larger women's camp that morning [...]. I was walking down the main highway which ran parallel with the little path when suddenly I heard the rattle of shots. The approaching burial lorry was visible through the barbed wire, and so was a running figure in a brown shirt and the grey-green trousers of the SS. From all around me on the thoroughfare people began to run towards the spot."

'An SS man! An escape attempt!' shouted someone. The running man turned in his tracks. Suddenly he mounted the little slope leading to the concrete water reservoir. He was clearly visible as he stood there for a moment on the brink. Shots rang out louder, but did not deter the dozens of men and women from rushing towards him. There was also a splash, and two British soldiers with sten guns also appeared on the brink of the tank. Their bullets played ducks and drakes, pitting the surface of the water. Then the head of the SS man appeared above the surface, floating listlessly there. There was a hum of excitement, a cheer and a clapping of hands."

Referring to yet another instance of legalized murder, Sington records:⁴⁵

"This was the first of two attempts by SS men to escape from the burial cortege.^[44] The second one happened two days later at exactly the same spot. I heard the same cry and stir in the camp, the same volley of shots. I ran to the water tank, and through the barbed wire fence I could see a running figure against the dark fir trees. He was a bull-like, bald-headed man, making straight along the pathway towards the western edge of the camp. The bullets caught up with him after fifty yards, and he stumbled and fell on his face. His laboured breathing still heaved his shoulders up and down as he lay there, and I could hear the breath coming from him in snorts. Then two soldiers walked up to him and pierced his body with lead."

Nor did the torments of the damned end with the end of a grisly day's work. Those who escaped death by shooting frequently died as a result of the contagion passed along by handling diseased and decomposing corpses without any protection whatsoever.

Notes author Dagmar Barnouw:⁴⁶

"Few of them survived it, almost all of them dying from typhoid contracted when carrying the corpses without any protection."

Needless to say, denial of medical treatment certainly contributed to their deaths.⁴⁷

The 25 SS female assistants, or Aufseherinnen, fared little better than the males at the hands of their tormentors. Not only were these women used to bury the festering mountains of corpses, but they were also used to clean filthy huts, the floors of which were caked inches thick with vomit, urine, and excrement. There was neither rhyme nor reason for these actions, since the British had already vacated the huts and had arrived at the decision to raze the camp to the ground. Yet, according to Rabbi Hardman,

these sadistically motivated tasks were assigned for the pleasure of the liberators.⁴⁸ Writes Hardman:⁴⁹

"[...] two SS women were detailed to clean a filthy hut, and it gave me an unaccountable feeling to see them scrubbing the walls, floor and ceiling under the keen eyes of a British guard."

The plight of these women evoked no pity in either the hearts of their guards or independent witnesses, according to an account written by war correspondent Alan Moorehead:⁵⁰

"Some 20 women wearing dirty grey skirts and tunics were sitting and lying on the floor. 'Get up,' the sergeant roared in English. They got up and stood at attention and we looked at them. Thin ones, fat ones, scraggy ones and muscular ones; all of them ugly and one or two of them distinctly cretinous."

In bizarre scenes similar to those of the French Revolution, when women alternately did their knitting in the spectators' gallery while shouting imprecations and accusations at the accused, many of the female inmates took to doggedly following the corpse-laden lorries, all the while screaming taunts and accusations at the harried SS.

Sington records an instance where one woman projected all her venom and wrath toward the camp doctor:⁵¹

"'You filthy swine, Dr. Klein,' she was yelling; 'where are my dear mother and my lovely sister and my sweet sister-in-law? All of them had to die. All of them had to go into the gas. Oh, you swine, you filthy swine.'"

Again, according to Sington:

"Not six months nor six years of such screamed denunciations and curses would have released all the pent-up hatred in her heart."

These imprecations and accusations did not go unnoticed by the British authorities, for Klein and all the other accused were soon to feel the unrestrained wrath of their interrogators. Alan Moorehead, a correspondent for the *Daily Express*, was a witness to one of these "interrogation sessions" at Belsen:

"As we approached the cells of the SS guards the sergeant's language became ferocious. 'We have had an interrogation this morning', the captain said. 'I'm afraid they are not a pretty sight.'

Who does the interrogation?

A Frenchman.^[52] I believe he was sent up here specifically from the French underground to do the job.

The sergeant unbolted the first door and flung it back with a crack like thunder. He strode into the cell jabbing a metal spike in front of him. 'Get up,' he shouted. 'Get up; get up, you dirty bastards.'

There were half a dozen men lying or half-lying on the floor. One or two were able to pull themselves erect at once. The man nearest me, his shirt and face spattered with blood, made two attempts before he got on to his knees and then gradually on to his feet. He stood with his arms half stretched out in front of him trembling violently.

'Get up,' shouted the sergeant. They were all on their feet now, but supporting themselves against the wall. 'Get away from that wall.' They pushed themselves out into space and stood there swaying. Unlike the women, they looked not at us but vacantly in front, staring at nothing.

Same thing in the next cell, and the next, where the men, who were bleeding and very dirty, were moaning something in German.

'You had better see the doctor,' the captain said.^[53] 'He's a nice specimen. He invented some of the tortures here [...^{54]}.'

The doctor had a cell to himself.

'Come on, get up', the sergeant shouted. The man was lying in his blood on the floor, a massive figure with a heavy head and a bedraggled beard. He placed his two arms on the seat of a wooden chair, gave himself a heave and got half-upright. One more heave and he was on his feet. He flung wide his arms towards us.

'Why don't you kill me?' he whispered. 'Why don't you kill me? I can't stand any more.'

The same phrases dribbled out of his lips over and over again.^[55]

A British army officer commented upon the treatment meted out to these unfortunate SS staff members:

It was surprising what licence, for instance, the discovery of the horrors of Belsen Camp gave to some of the men with the army. Why, nothing was too bad to commit against a nation which allowed things like Belsen!''⁵⁶

Yet with the passage of time and distance, historians and researchers would become more objective in their accounts of what happened at Belsen and why. For example, according to Konnilyn G. Feig:⁵⁷

"If it had not been for a typhus epidemic and overcrowding, the word Belsen might never have entered our vocabulary of the Holocaust. Unfortunately, near the end of the war prisoners from every part of Europe were trucked, marched, or taken by cattle car to Belsen to escape the

advancing Allies. Thus, the camp doubled in size in the last months. Food became scarce or nonexistent. Because of the influx of diseased evacuees, one of the worst typhus plagues in the history of the camps broke out, sweeping through Belsen in almost demonic fury. Most of the camp population died either from starvation or typhus, or a combination of both—so quickly that thousands of bodies piled up all over the area.”

And according to Robert H. Abzug:⁵⁸

“The final great wave came in early 1945, when the Nazis shipped a good part of the population of Auschwitz to Belsen’s already overcrowded barracks. And with these prisoners came the typhus bug. With little or no food or potable water, and typhus running rampant, Belsen became an uncontrollable nightmare of death and depravity. Yet the transports still arrived, and the population of the camp swelled to 60,000 by the first week of April.”

In view of these more enlightened, revised, and reasonable viewpoints, it should no longer appear shocking as it did in 1945 when one reads that Kramer once remarked that he did not have a bad conscience, and became a Nazi only because he had to choose between communism and National Socialism.⁵⁹

With the passage of time and mature reflection, those who, like Derrick Sington, once participated in the mass frenzy of liberation and revenge, sometimes look back with dismay and regret over their impulsive actions five decades ago.

Among these individuals is one Emmanuel Fisher, who recently recounted his experiences whilst stationed at Belsen. According to Fisher, wholesale looting was also a part of the liberation process. Fisher, who at the time of liberation was a 24-year-old radiographer attached to the British Medical Corps, kept a written diary of his experiences while stationed at the camp and in one of his entries he writes:

“When we got to the camp, the Sergeant said, ‘Here, boys, help yourselves, there are a lot of watches here.’

Commenting upon this passage decades later, Fisher exclaimed:⁶⁰

“I’m ashamed—I don’t know whether I took a watch but it didn’t occur to me, we didn’t know. We just thought it was booty that had been left lying around. Everybody grabbed watches. Dear God.”

There is little doubt but that the horrifying conditions at the Belsen camp were also sedulously exploited by the Allies for propaganda and “educa-

tional” purposes. Alfred Hitchcock, the cinematic master of mayhem, murder, and mystery, was commissioned to film a documentary recounting the liberation of the camp. The gifted British actor Trevor Howard was enlisted as narrator. More often than not propaganda mixed with horrific truth was spoon-fed to journalists and observers from inmates. For example, in Belsen, as in many other liberated camps, Sington writes that one of his subordinates “had been in contact with an “international committee” of the camp inmates, whose leading members claimed to express the public opinion of the prisoners in the camp [...]”⁶¹

Furthermore, Russian members of this committee “had secured revolvers and were planning to take revenge on at least five Block Seniors.”⁶²

The members of this committee were actively encouraged to denounce other inmates and staff members to the Allies.⁶³

Also, according to Sington, “when the school was organized, volunteer teachers from among the camp inmates staffed it, and the majority of witnesses called by the War Crimes Investigation Team were found and cross-examined by two Czech Jewish girls.”⁶⁴

A convincing example of tall-tale bearing was recounted by Rabbi Leslie H. Hardman, who was among the first to enter the Belsen Camp as a liberator. Hardman had been told by, and apparently believed, one of the inmates that a gas chamber had been under construction in the Belsen camp just prior to the arrival of the British.⁶⁵ After hearing this Hardman wrote:⁶⁶

“During March 1945 a devilish plan was conceived by the SS. They intended to build, partly underground, a large barracks, which they admitted was to be a ‘gas chamber.’ The plan was ready, the builders were ordered, the time estimated for completion was four or five weeks. We knew that the British had reached the Rhine, and those of us who knew also of the latest SS plan for our extermination feverishly counted the days as the front line approached. Which would reach us first? We heard the distant thunder of the guns. Would they arrive before the gas?”

Of course these were not the only accusations to be made against the SS by the former suffering inmates. Other charges made against them by inmate and liberator alike were:

That the SS stole food from the prisoners’ Red Cross packages. While not denying the possibility that this may have happened, it must be stated that if such thefts did occur and were discovered and reported to higher authorities, the perpetrators, if found guilty as charged, were subject to rig-

orous punishment. According to SS regulations, “[...]any SS man caught stealing food from a package sent to one of the prisoners—will be executed.”⁶⁷

The SS were also accused of being “healthy and well-fed” while deliberately starving the prisoners to death and depriving them of water.⁶⁸

This peculiar viewpoint has apparently been adopted as factual by a number of post-war researchers and historians. Most likely this line of argument is a direct result and carry-over of the frustration, rage, and apparent inability of the Allies to accept the harsh realities of the situation which faced Kramer and his staff. For example, author Tom Bower repeats an Allied accusation which dates back to 1945 and its particular mind-set. He writes:

Two miles away, in the stores of a Panzer training school, were eight hundred tons of food, neatly stacked in warehouses, and a bakery capable of producing sixty thousand loaves (of bread) a day.”⁶⁹

However, from the account above, it appears that the British did not requisition those supplies either.⁷⁰ Indeed, also according to Bower, a number of British officers sympathized with the camp commandant, Josef Kramer. Bower writes:⁷¹

“Josef Kramer, Belsen’s commandant, had come out to meet the British troops and asked for their help. Many British officers thereafter believed that Kramer, who had been trained at Auschwitz, had done his best to help the inmates.”

In fact, even the despised commandant of Auschwitz, Rudolf Höss, supported Kramer’s claims in his autobiography, where he wrote:⁷³

“[...] when Auschwitz was evacuated, and a large proportion of the prisoners came to Bergen-Belsen, the camp was at once filled to overflowing and a situation arose which even I accustomed as I was to Auschwitz, could only describe as dreadful. Kramer was powerless to cope with it. Even Pohl^[72] was shocked when he saw the conditions, during our lightning tour of all the concentration camps which the Reichsführer SS had ordered us to undertake. He at once commandeered a neighboring camp from the army so that there would at least be room to breathe, but conditions there were no better. There was hardly any water, and the drains simply emptied into the adjoining fields. Typhus and spotted typhus were rampant. A start was immediately made on the building of mud huts, to provide additional accommodation. But it was all too little and too late [...] so it was little wonder that the British found only dead or dying or persons stricken with disease,

and scarcely a handful of healthy prisoners in a camp that was in an unimaginably disgusting condition."

In all fairness to Kramer it must be said, in view of the predicament in which he had found himself inextricably entangled, that there appears to be very little which he could have done to ameliorate the lot of the inmates at Belsen other than acknowledge his complete helplessness in view of the situation and surrender the camp to the British, which he did. It would appear that, under the circumstances, everything which could have been done, was in fact, done. His options were, when all is said and done, quite limited. As has been noted, after the arrival of the British, inmates continued to die at a most alarming rate in spite of the most intensive medical care and treatment. It has been estimated that 28,000 people died at Belsen from the time the camp passed on to British administration. Many of those who had volunteered to assist in a noble humanitarian effort to preserve lives were struck down by typhus themselves during the course of their duties. Unable to contain the epidemic through emergency measures instituted within the camp itself, the British, like the Germans, were compelled to deal drastically with the situation by a process of "selection" in which the seriously ill were transported out of the camp and isolated from the rest of the population. The rest of the camp was soon dissolved and razed to the ground as a source of contamination and infection.

On the day the camp was razed, the British assembled the local citizens and broadcast the following message as the huts went up in a sea of flames. A huge banner bearing Adolf Hitler's image had been tacked along the length of one of the buildings before it was ignited. The British announced:⁷⁴

"What you will see here is the final and utter condemnation of the Nazi Party. It justifies every measure which the United Nations will take to exterminate that Party. What you will see here is such a disgrace to the German people that their name must be erased from the list of civilized nations [...]. You must expect to atone with toil and sweat for what your children have committed and for what you have failed to prevent. Whatever you may suffer it will not be one hundredth part of what these poor people endured in this and other camps [...]."

Kramer's prophecy had finally come to pass.⁷⁵

Either coincidentally or as a result of deliberate political calculation, the Belsen Trial symbolically took place at Lüneburg in September 1945, less than 6 months after the liberation of the camp. Kramer and 44 others were charged with war crimes. Conspicuously absent from the trial were Kra-

mer's superiors—the only people who could have testified on his behalf and perhaps saved him from the gallows. Rudolf Höss and Oswald Pohl, Kramer's nominal superiors, would not be captured until 1946. SS General Richard Glücks, head of the concentration camp directorate, was alternately claimed to have committed suicide or was murdered at Flensburg Naval Hospital on May 10, 1945, and all traces of Dr. Lolling, chief medical overseer for the concentration camps, appear to have vanished into thin air.⁷⁶ Needless to add, each of these potential witnesses was wanted as war criminals themselves by the Allies, which explains their reluctance to step forward and testify on behalf of their subordinate.

Kramer was ably represented at his trial by Major T. C. M. Winwood, R. A., but as he was unable to present any evidence on behalf of his client from his erstwhile superiors, Kramer's fate was a foregone conclusion. Thwarted as he was in this regard, Winwood was reduced to calling Kramer's wife as a witness on his behalf. In the summation portion of his opening statement to the court, Winwood coined a clever phrase which would singularly stand out in the course of the trial proceedings:⁷⁷

"In the last days, Kramer stood completely alone, deserted by his superiors, while these waves of circumstances beat around him. Since the date of the liberation by the British, Josef Kramer, former Kommandant, has been bruited throughout the world as 'The Beast of Belsen.' When the curtain finally rings down on this stage, Josef Kramer will, in my submission, stand forth not as 'The Beast of Belsen,' but as 'The Scapegoat of Belsen,' the scapegoat for the man Heinrich Himmler, whose bones are rotting not far from here, and as the scapegoat for the whole National Socialist regime."

Indeed, it was bitterly ironic that the corpse of Heinrich Himmler, who, more than any other individual, could have absolved Kramer of any personal blame, was rotting in an unmarked grave only a few miles from where the trial was taking place, and neither Josef Kramer nor his defense attorney had the vaguest idea as to the convoluted chain of events which had placed him there.

Notes

- ¹ Hilary Gaskin. *Eyewitnesses at Nuremberg*. Arms and Armour Press, 1990, p. 25. These words were uttered by a British emissary from the camp to a press correspondent as he was just finishing his meal. Nevertheless, Kramer's entire professional career was limited to service with the concentration camp system. Beginning as a guard at Dachau in 1934, Kramer later served at Esterwegen, and was returned for service at Dachau in 1936, eventually becoming adjutant

to the commandant of Sachsenhausen in 1937. In 1939 Kramer was transferred to Mauthausen. In 1940 he was promoted to deputy commandant at Auschwitz, and again transferred in 1942 to Natzweiler. In May 1944, just prior to the deportation of Hungarian Jews, Kramer was again transferred to Auschwitz, where he received an appointment as commandant of the infamous Birkenau camp. Finally, under protest, Kramer was transferred to Belsen on December 2, 1944, replacing its previous commandant, Adolf Haas.

- ² In an interview with *News Correspondents*, Pierpoint had described Kramer as “frightening.”
- ³ In a letter addressed to his in-laws from prison, Kramer wrote, “I’m a good man, otherwise our Rosie would not have married me.” —As cited by author Tom Segev, *Soldiers of Evil*, Berkeley Books, N.Y., 1991, p. 54. Kramer was undoubtedly sensitive to the way he was being portrayed in the press as “The Beast of Belsen.”
- ⁴ According to Rudolf Höss, who was to achieve infamy as the commandant of Auschwitz, and who was Kramer’s nominal superior, Kramer was selected to replace Belsen commandant *Sturmbannführer* Haas, a “grim, taciturn man” who “governed the place as he saw fit.” According to Höss, Haas “made no attempt to improve the state of the buildings or the grim hygienic conditions prevailing at Bergen-Belsen [...]. He had to be relieved of his post in the autumn of 1944 because of the way he neglected the camp and carried on with women, and I had to go there and install Kramer, previously commandant of Auschwitz II, in his place.” *Commandant of Auschwitz*, Popular Library, 1961 edition, p. 153.
- ⁵ It was not only difficult then, but it is difficult now, to try and determine exactly how many inmates died and of what causes at Belsen during the last six months of its existence. All the camp records pertaining to inmate strength, arrest records, and so on were burned on orders from Berlin. The estimates vary among historians, but it appears that 28,000 is a more or less generally accepted figure—but this figure appears to refer only to those who died after the British assumed responsibility for the camp. At his trial, Kramer found the British claim that 13,000 corpses were lying about the camp on the day of liberation incredible. See: *The Belsen Trial*, Caiger-Smith, p. 179. When the British liberated the camp, the number of inmates was estimated to have been around 53-60,000, in a camp which was originally designed to accommodate 15,000. To this day, the scenes from Belsen conjure up frightfully horrendous images and visions of soul-wrenching pathos.
- ⁶ *The Illustrated London News*, April 28, 1945-No. 3027-Vol. 116, pp. 458-459.
- ⁷ *After the Battle Magazine* records yet another section of the Belsen Camp which they refer to as “The Sonder-Lager,” or “Special Camp.” Rather curiously, the article maintains that within this section of the camp “350 Polish Jews with Latin American passports or Palestine Certificates who remained after the Auschwitz transfers” were held. The article states that “they were kept separate because they could inform the other inmates of the Nazi atrocities going on in the east,” which strikes this author as rather bizarre, as it seems more likely that the SS would have simply opted to eliminate them outright in order to assure their silence, rather than risk exposure of their crimes.
- ⁸ *ATB*, Issue 89, p. 3

- ⁹ Gaskin, Hilary, *Eyewitnesses at Nuremberg*, pp. 25, 26.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 138, 139
- ¹¹ Citation from *Last Days of the Third Reich*, James Lucas, William Morrow and Co. 1986, pp. 184-185.
- ¹² *After the Battle*, Issue Number 89, London, p. 4.
- ¹³ According to Martin Gilbert: "On April 15, the first British tanks entered Belsen. By chance, three of the British soldiers in the tanks were Jews."—*The Holocaust*, Holt, Rinehart, Winston, N.Y., 1985, p. 793.
- ¹⁴ Sington, who was half-Jewish, had long been an outspoken opponent and critic of National Socialism. In 1943 he had co-authored a book with Arthur Weidenfeld entitled *The Goebbels Experiment*, in which German propaganda methods were examined and analyzed in detail.
- ¹⁵ Sington. *Belsen Uncovered*. Duckworth Publishers, London, p. 12.
- ¹⁶ As cited in Caiger-Smith, *The Belsen Trial*, London, p. 47.
- ¹⁷ The grounds, as well as the barracks, were covered with excrement, garbage and urine. Most of the prisoners were simply so ill and debilitated that they did not have the strength to make it to the latrines, which were some distance away from the barracks.
- ¹⁸ At his trial, Kramer castigated Sington for bringing loudspeakers into the camp, citing this as one of the reasons why pandemonium broke out among the prisoners and eventually resulted in a number of deaths and casualties. Kramer testified, "I told him (Sington) that the prisoners were quiet at the moment but I feared that if he was going into the camp with his van and sending out some message it might cause some trouble. At first he went away but soon came back and gave his message through the loudspeaker [...] the first thing (which resulted) was that the prisoners destroyed everything; they destroyed the remaining beds, they made fires and they started looting. Several stores were looted. Tanks had to guard the food stores, and on the next day many troops had to use firearms and several men were found killed the next morning. Two hours after the loudspeaker had gone through the camp the camp was in an indescribable condition."—*The Belsen Trial*, pp. 171-172.
- ¹⁹ *Belsen Uncovered*, Sington, Duckworth Pub, London, p. 19. This comment by the Wehrmacht Colonel indicates that the staff was allowed to retain their sidearms according to the terms of the truce as the Germans understood them. Apparently the SS had already been singled out by the British as being a criminal organization; thus, they were to be disarmed, in their opinion, while the Hungarians might be permitted for a while to retain their firearms to maintain order. However, it appears that the Wehrmacht Colonel insisted that even the SS should be allowed the right to retain their sidearms.
- ²⁰ Taylor insisted that the SS be disarmed completely.
- ²¹ Kramer's apprehensions were not entirely unjustified, for as one journalist wrote at the time, "[...] German guards were often caught before they could escape, and they were often killed by the inmates. At Buchenwald, which was one of the camps I went to, they had caught one of the commandants and hung him on the barbed wire."—Statement of Sean Maynes, as cited in Gaskin, *Eyewitnesses at Nuremberg*, Arms and Armour, 1990, p. 3.

- ²² Apparently by the time Kramer and the group reached the potato field, the other inmates raiding the patch had either scampered off or were driven away by guards or Kapos.
- ²³ An unknown number of German personnel shot at or into a mass of inmates as they tried to storm the kitchen just prior to the arrival of Kramer and Sington. It may well be that the shooting was a result of panic. At his trial, Kramer contested the allegation that the shooters were members of the SS. He ascribed the shootings to the inexperienced Wehrmacht and Hungarian troops, who would have been more prone to panic. Even prosecution witness H.O. Le Druillenec testified to the fact that, "[...] the only shootings I saw on the last three days were by Hungarian guards." -*Belsen Trial*, Op Cit., p. 64. Apparently, the British confused the Hungarian SS members with Kramer's German staff. See: *Belsen Trial*, p. 179. Evidently the Germans adopted the view that the attempt to storm the kitchens by "mobs of inmates" was a lawless, criminal act in a camp where starvation and epidemics were rampant. It should be noted that even among the inmates, a fellow inmate risked being killed by his own comrades if he was caught stealing food from others. Note: Brigadier General Glenn Hughes testified to the fact that there was a "mob swarming up and down the main road" at the time of the shooting. See: *Belsen Trial*, op. cit., p. 40. Hughes was also asked the following by Major Cranfield, "A good deal has been said of internees receiving such severe beatings that they were hospital cases. Did any of those come to your notice?" Hughes replied, "I saw one." -*Ibid.*, p. 38.
- ²⁴ In Sington's written account of this episode, he glosses over the fact that the terms and conditions of the truce were arbitrarily broken at this point by the British, who, by now had become incensed over conditions prevailing in the camp. At the Belsen Trial, however, the British accused the Germans of breaking the terms of the surrender by allowing the remaining SS administrative staff to retain their firearms. This accusation appears to have had no basis in fact, for as we have seen, even the SS were to have been allowed the right to retain their sidearms. Thus, the accusation appears to have been used simply to justify breaking the terms of the truce by the British, who in any event, regarded the SS staff members as criminals.
- ²⁵ Recollection of John D'Arcy-Dawson, as cited in *After the Battle*, Op. cit., p. 14.
- ²⁶ Sington, *Belsen Uncovered*, Op. cit., p. 26.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 27.
- ²⁸ The man turned out to be Harold Le Druillenec, a Jersey schoolmaster, who had recently been arrested for helping Russian prisoners of war escape to Jersey. Druillenec was later to feature prominently as a witness at the Belsen trial, even though he had only been in the camp for ten days!
- ²⁹ He and Sington were to meet again one year later—as witnesses at the Belsen trial.
- ³⁰ By the time of the Belsen trial, Hoessler was to be a sobbing emotional and physical wreck.
- ³¹ op cit., *After the Battle*, p. 15.
- ³² One can only wonder why Steinmetz never made this suggestion to Kramer before the arrival of the British. However, if he had, and Kramer implemented

the idea, it may only have served as further grist for the Allied propagandists who would have claimed that piping in untreated water led to further deaths among the inmates. In addition, Kramer testified at his trial that he had been told, contrary to what the British maintained, that the water in the river “was not fit for drinking.” See *Belsen Trial, Op. cit.*, p. 178. Thus it would appear that he had already considered this option and vetoed it based upon that information. The British piped in the water and 28,000 people later died. See fn. 29 for amplification.

- ³³ This compulsory use of civilians as labor, coupled with threats, was completely illegal, but was confirmed by Rabbi Hardman, who wrote, “The initial water supply was provided by a convoy of water carts which arrived together with food. This was supplemented and later replaced by water pumped to the camp by German civilian fire brigades, working under military direction and supervision [...]. They were told that if they did not come their wives and children would have to [...].”—*The Survivors*, pp. 29, 30.

- ³⁴ Manifold explanations have been offered for this shockingly high death rate after liberation. Some authorities have claimed that the food which the British brought into the camp was “too rich” for the inmates. The author has consulted with a physician and discussed the implications of these high death rates, and one possible cause may lie with the fact that water was pumped into the camp from the river, which may have carried unknown contaminants at the time. Thus for people suffering from severely compromised immune systems, dysentery and other intestinal ailments, such untreated water may very well have resulted in death. It should be noted that after about a week, fresh water was brought into the camp via British field carts. This interpretation is seemingly confirmed by Rabbi Hardman, who was among the first contingents to enter the camp. He wrote, “The original emergency supply consisted of water straight from the stream, and there had been no time to chlorinate or filter it. As conditions improved it became possible to treat the water adequately, although dead bodies were frequently found in the reservoirs.” *The Survivors—The Story of the Belsen Remnant* by Leslie H. Hardman Valentine Mitchell, London, 1958, pp. 29, 30. Furthermore, testimony at the Belsen Trial confirmed that 80% of the inmates held at Belsen were suffering from dysentery. Other afflictions were, of course, spotted typhus, tuberculosis, gastric-enteritis, and even a few cases of cholera. The compounds were littered with trash filth, excreta and all sorts of debris, and the inmates had absolutely no resistance whatsoever to disease. Typhus, like AIDS, is a “wasting disease” which will mimic the effects of starvation. However, in camp number one, typhus was almost non-existent, having virtually spent itself just prior to the arrival of the British. Nevertheless, the people housed there were also suffering from acute malnutrition. In camp two, there were 266 active cases of typhus among 8000. In camp 1 (the women’s camp), in an overall population of 23,000, there were 2000 acute hospital cases and of these 250 were suffering from typhus at the time of liberation. In the women’s number 2 camp, there were 300 cases of typhus among 5000 housed there. Testimony at the Belsen Trial showed that after liberation, typhus was still spreading throughout the camp at the rate of seven new cases per day. Thousands had died prior to the day of liberation from the usual causes, but it

seems there were also unknown numbers of dead due to the British bombing and strafing the camp. Sington records the account of one inmate who informed him, "Some of the most unpleasant experiences of this period were the night raids by British aircraft. The British pilots probably saw the sparks coming from the crematorium chimney or the glowing remnants of the bonfires in which the dead had been burnt, and nearly every night they machine-gunned the camp."—Sington, *op cit.*, *Belsen Uncovered*, p. 136.

- ³⁵ The British had already formed the opinion that the SS itself was a criminal organization and that its highest leaders were archcriminals. Lists had already been drawn up in London which earmarked some 150 National Socialist Party Members and Higher SS Leaders for immediate execution. British intelligence had already been supplied with a list of names of those who were wanted by the Allies for war crimes. Note that Britain did not formally sign the Allied declaration to try accused Nazi war criminals until August 1945. During the negotiations to surrender the Belsen camp intact, the British had already shown signs that they were prepared to deal harshly with any and all SS members. For instance, refer to the repeated attempts by the British to completely disarm all SS personnel in the camp, combined with their brutal treatment of those later taken into custody. This uncompromising attitude carried over into the Trial of Josef Kramer et. al., and is confirmed by the fact that, of all those charged with crimes at this trial, only those who were members of the SS or their assistants (specifically, the female SS auxiliaries), received the death sentence, while those who were far more responsible for the everyday tormenting and persecution of the inmates, *i.e.*, the "Kapos," were let off with jail sentences. Many of these former Kapos were released after having served only a short period of their original sentence.
- ³⁶ Kramer later complained at his trial that these manacles had been left on for weeks. Kramer also complained at the time of his trial that his arrest had been contrary to the conditions of the truce agreed upon by the British and German authorities. See: *The Belsen Trial*, *op cit.*, p. 171.
- ³⁷ The information regarding Kramer's humiliation was testified to at the Belsen Trial by Derrick Sington, p. 51, *The Belsen Trial*, Caiger-Smith, London. Sington left this description out of his published book.
- ³⁸ By the time Kramer was sitting in his cell at Lüneburg, he had written to his wife, "What do they want from me? Maybe they are putting me on trial just because I was in the SS." As cited by Tom Segev, *Soldiers of Evil*, Berkley Books, 1991, p.54.
- ³⁹ Today it may be said quite candidly that it requires quite a stretch of the imagination to maintain that these 50 assorted and doomed staff members were responsible for the general state of affairs existing in Belsen at the time. Note that Franz Hoessler had not even arrived at Belsen until days before the camp was liberated. Events had simply overtaken them.
- ⁴⁰ Barnouw, *Germany*, 1945, p. 68.
- ⁴¹ Mosley, *Report from Germany*, p. 93.
- ⁴² *Face of the Enemy*, Caiger-Smith, Chap. 1., n. 18., 3, 52, and 53.
- ⁴³ Sington. *op. cit.*, p. 87.

- ⁴⁴ It is clear that both of these victims of Allied revenge had been driven to madness as a result of their treatment at the hands of their captors.
- ⁴⁵ Sington. *op. cit.*, p. 28. This unfortunate man may be seen in Dagmar Barnouw, Germany, 1945 in the section covering Belsen. It is a rather infamous photo, which has appeared in many different publications, as well as in newsreels from the time. Ms Barnouw refers to the man's physical appearance as an unfortunate circumstance of birth, which caused the British guards to focus all their rage and hatred in his direction.
- ⁴⁶ Dagmar Barnouw, *Germany 1945*, Indiana University Press, 1996, p. 68.
- ⁴⁷ At the Belsen Trial, one of these SS victims of British wrath was referred to rather obliquely when the Presiding Judge asked Brigadier Glen Hughes a question about one of the SS guards. Hughes responded, "[...] I think he has since died." The Judge did not bother to inquire as to the cause and circumstances of death. The Belsen Trial, *op. cit.*, p. 34.
- ⁴⁸ Rabbi Hardman himself was to contract typhus while tending to the liberated inmates at Belsen. After performing religious services one evening, the Rabbi was invited to partake of a traditional Jewish meal of Gefilte fish, prepared by some of the liberated inmates. Not wishing to offend his hosts, the rabbi partook of the offering, along with an undetermined "beverage" prepared by them as well. Within 24 hours, the Rabbi writes: "I suffered an attack of dysentery which brought the water problem acutely home to me [...]. I lay for nearly 48 hours before I was able to move. Then I felt better, but terribly weak; and for several days after that it was an effort to get about." *op. cit.*, *The Survivors*, pp. 30-31.
- ⁴⁹ Hardman, *op. cit.*, p. 35.
- ⁵⁰ *op. cit.*, *After the Battle*, p. 14.
- ⁵¹ Sington, *op. cit.* p. 86.
- ⁵² This same "Frenchman" also interrogated the women.
- ⁵³ The doctor was Klein.
- ⁵⁴ This was a completely malicious and false accusation, like so many which were circulating in the camp at the time. For example, Rabbi Hardman includes the following accusation by inmates, which he apparently believed at the time: "Another punishment was to force the unhappy wretch to take out a dead man's eye, hold it between his lips and remain in a sitting position with hands stretched above his head for two hours. At the slightest sign of weakness causing him to lower his hands he was beaten viciously until he expired [...]," p.7, *The Survivors*. One is at a loss for an explanation in seeking a source or reasons for these incredible stories. Perhaps Derrick Sington was not far off when he testified that "[...] in a great many cases, [...] there were many prisoners who went mad after typhus [...]"—*op. cit.*, *The Belsen Trial*, p. 53.
- ⁵⁵ Moorehead, *Eclipse 1945*, pp. 223-4, as cited by Belgion in *Victor's Justice*, Henry Regnery, 1949, Ill., pp. 80-81. Belgion duly notes that Klein was not charged with "deliberate cruelty" at the Belsen trial! Furthermore, if Klein could be broken in this manner, how little effort would have been involved in breaking a man like Hoessler. Kramer was to receive similar treatment at the hands of his interrogators, who brought him to Brussels. Belgion writes: "According to the Canadian military newspaper *Maple Leaf*, when Josef Kramer,

commandant of the notorious Belsen camp, arrived at Brussels, "After getting out of a plane which brought him from Germany, he was put in a truck and taken across the airfield. He was slow getting out of the truck. So a military policeman grabbed him by the back of the neck and threw him out, and he landed on his face in the dirt, whimpering like a child. He presented a sorry sight." p. 80.

⁵⁶ *op. cit.*, Barnouw, Chap. 1, n. 33. It goes without saying that in our present era, the treatment meted out to the accused at Belsen would warrant an immediate dismissal of charges.

⁵⁷ *Hitler's Death Camps*. Feig. Houghton Mifflin, p. 370.

⁵⁸ *Inside the Vicious Heart*, Oxford University Press, 1985, p. 83. These descriptions of the Belsen camp conform to Höss's account in his autobiography. He writes: "The camp was a picture of wretchedness. The barracks and the storehouse and even the guards quarters were completely neglected. Sanitary conditions were far worse than at Auschwitz." -p. 153. Both Feig and Abzug's views in this regard were supported at the time of the Belsen trial by Glen Hughes, when he testified before the court that, "Typhus was brought in on 5th February by Hungarian prisoners, and it then raged right through the camp, where conditions were absolutely suitable for it. The same with tuberculosis."—Testimony of Brigadier Glyn Hughes, *Belsen Trial*, p. 33.

⁵⁹ *Time Magazine*, April 30, 1945. In the same issue, Kramer was described as a "brutish pig-eyed leader."

⁶⁰ As cited in *The Independent*, 06-04-1998, p. 19.

⁶¹ These "international committees" appear to have been highly organized in a number of camps. For example, according to Sean Maynes, a journalist assigned to George Patton's Third Army, "There were a lot of phony stories written about the camps. The reality was bad enough, but often some correspondents were inclined to exaggerate.[...]At one camp we went into, within half an hour there were typewriters going in one of the buildings, and there were inmates, chaps who didn't seem to have been ill-treated at all, sitting typing out press releases and handling out press statements about what had happened to the inmates. And we'd just entered the damn place! So there was a degree of organization there."—As cited in Gaskin, *Eyewitnesses at Nuremberg*, Arms and Armour, 1990, p. 3.

⁶² *op cit.*, Sington, *Belsen Uncovered*, p. 75.

⁶³ Confirmed in the testimony of Captain Sington at the Belsen trial. During cross-examination he was asked, "Was it known to all the prisoners at the time that it was possible to produce accusations or depositions against the senior prisoners?" To which he replied, "There was a committee of prisoners in the camp which was called the International Committee, and they were asked to produce accusations against such people who had behaved in this brutal manner." *Belsen Trial*, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 154.

⁶⁵ The name of this inmate was Dr. Fritz Leo, and he went on to give testimony at the Belsen trial. Here is the version he gave to the court at the time: "A gas chamber was in preparation. A very trustworthy and good Kapo, a Czech, told me that in the middle of March he had orders from his SS building contractor to

build a hut underground which was to have been covered entirely with earth and kept air-tight. When Bellenech said to this SS contractor, "I know perfectly well for what purpose this underground hut is being built," the SS man looked at him and said, "Well, I think you are right." It was quite clear to all of us that plans for a gas chamber had been prepared." —The Belsen Trial, *op. cit.*, p. 124. Coincidentally, an almost identical story was circulating at the same time about Dachau. Bellenech appears to have disappeared from the scene. Thus, the gas chamber story was based upon the flimsiest hearsay, but was nevertheless accepted as a bona fide fact by the inmates. Dr. Leo had been incarcerated in the camps since May 1935, and had arrived at Belsen in February 1945. He was not asked the reason for his long imprisonment.

⁶⁶ Hardman, Leslie, *The Survivors—The Story of the Belsen Remnant*. Valentine Mitchell, London, 1958, p. 8. This yarn was told to Rabbi Hardman by Dr. Leo Fritz, an inmate. Kramer emphatically denied this accusation at his trial. Curiously, in his first written statement to his interrogators, Kramer denied there were any gas chambers at Auschwitz as well, but in a second statement, apparently taken after he arrived in Brussels for further questioning, affirmed that there had been gas chambers there after all, but that he had not selected anyone for them personally. For the sake of argument, it may very well be that his interrogators were content to allow him to contest the "gas chamber" accusations re Belsen, since it was a story which could have easily been checked by the authorities at the time, and most likely had been. Auschwitz, being under Soviet control, was inaccessible. Furthermore, the prosecution at the Belsen trial based a part of its case on Auschwitz, and had called a number of witnesses, such as Ada Bimko, who testified to gas chambers at the camp and cited a figure of 4 million dead. The choice facing prosecutors, apparently, was to either go with the witnesses, the 4 million, and the gas chambers in Poland, or strike the accusations from the testimonies and affidavits. The gas chamber testimony is further complicated by Kramer's alleged complicity in the case of the so-called "Jewish Bolshevik Commissars." At his trial Kramer testified to constructing a gas chamber at the Natzweiler concentration camp at the express orders of the *Reichsführer-SS* Heinrich Himmler. The current version of this story is that Himmler ordered executions based upon a request from SS Doctor Hirt. However, one of the major issues challenging the credibility of this story is that at the Belsen trial, the prosecutor refers to Rudolf Höss, the former commandant of Auschwitz, as being the "doctor" who made the request, and Kramer repeats the same name twice! See: *The Belsen Trial, op. cit.*, p. 174. Cross-examination of Josef Kramer by Colonel Backhouse.

⁶⁷ As quoted by Tom Segev, *Soldiers of Evil*, Berkley Books, 1991, p. 43. Original document may be found cited by Segev as "Bundesarchiv Koblenz, October 29, 1942, NS 3 425."

⁶⁸ This is perhaps one of the flimsiest charges made against the SS staff, for rather obvious reasons. To begin with, there were only 50 staff members at the camp when the British assumed responsibility for the care of the inmates. Even if they had shared their rations with some of the inmates, the food would not have gone far—for there arises the problem as to which inmates should receive a "share" of the SS's own rations[...]. Thus, references to "fat and healthy SS guards and

matrons” simply serves as yet another desperate propaganda device for those determined to affix some type of exclusive blame upon the 50 SS staff members who remained behind at Belsen. As Kramer tried to explain to the court at his trial, “Instead of being enabled to diminish the strength of my camp as was my plan, I was forced to take in more and more and to overcrowd it. These transports came from Dora Concentration Camp, and Hoessler, who was to be in charge of Camp No. 2, came with the last 15,000[...].” In regard to the food supply, Kramer testified, “I could not give them (the newly arrived inmates) anything at all because the reserves which I had were reserves for a certain period and were required for the inmates of my own camp. To get food was quite impossible because the front lines were all broken, and apart from that, transport was very difficult. My own trucks were shot to pieces (Note: Kramer had originally been allotted 6 trucks) by dive bombers just before the arrival of the Allies, so that all that was left was one single truck. The Wehrmacht were prepared to give some supplies in the barrack area to Hoessler to avoid any trouble arising, but these were only given under the promise that I would restitute them whenever my own supplies arrived.” *Belsen Trial, op. cit.*, p. 168.

⁶⁹ *Blind Eye to Murder*, Tom Bower, Little Brown & Co., 1995, p. 128.

⁷⁰ When questioned on this at the Belsen trial, Major Birney was asked by the Presiding Judge: “Did you enquire from the Hauptmann whether Kramer could demand the rations that he wanted, and if the Hauptmann would not give him them for the internees, could he over-ride the Hauptmann, or had he (Kramer) to take from the Hauptmann what the latter liked to give him?” To which Birney simply replied, “My conversation with the Hauptmann did not touch upon that subject.” *The Belsen Trial, op. cit.*, p. 56.

⁷¹ Bower notes Kramer’s efforts to obtain relief for the inmates of the Belsen Camp: “Kramer consistently maintained that he had desperately tried to prevent the tens of thousands of deaths at Belsen. He produced the copy of a letter he had written to Richard Glücks, the Inspector of Concentration Camps, on 1 March 1945, urging him not to send any more Jews to the camp because of the typhus outbreak, which was causing fifty to three hundred deaths per day. Many British officers were impressed by that letter and by Kramer’s behavior when he surrendered the camp to the British. He asked them for desperately needed medicines and food, pleading that he had been abandoned in the closing stages of the war without supplies. *op. cit.*, p. 206. However, in a later segment on page 209, Bowers qualifies these comments by remarking, “His supporters chose to ignore the fact that two miles away was a Wehrmacht store containing no less than eight hundred tons of food. Kramer had not asked for the food because it would have meant ‘special indents.’” However, as we have already pointed out, there appears to be no evidence, based upon the statements of other participants at the time, that the British authorities requisitioned these supplies either, for Rabbi Hardman remarks in his book, “p. 44: The army appointed a food officer, who arranged for various farms to send in milk, eggs and vegetables; but the supplies which arrived were mere handfuls against the great need.” The Rabbi also records that he was reduced to unauthorized begging for food stocks from local farmers. He reports one instance where he lied to Polish farm workers, telling them that the requested food was for “Polish” inmates who

were starving at the camp. The Poles gave him the food. See Hardman, *op. cit.*, p.48.

⁷² Oswald Pohl, head of the SS-WVHA Main Office., which oversaw concentration camps.

⁷³ Höss, *op. cit.*, pp. 153, 154.

⁷⁴ *op. cit.*, Sington, *Belsen Uncovered*, p. 91. On a previous occasion, civilians had been escorted into the camp compound and led to the site of a massive open grave, in front of which the SS staff had been assembled. As everyone gazed into the vast pit, the British announced over the loudspeaker, "You, who are the fathers of German youth, see in front of your eyes some of the sons and daughters who carry a small part of the responsibility for these crimes. Only a small part and yet more difficult to carry than the human soul possibly can. But who carries the responsibility? You, who allowed your Führer to carry out this flagrant madness; you, who could not get enough of these degenerate triumphs; you, who heard about these camps." -As cited in *After the Battle*, No. 89, p. 22.

⁷⁵ "Soon," he told Sington, "the whole camp will be ablaze."

⁷⁶ This is according to Reitlinger in *The Final Solution*, Yoseloff Pub., 2nd edition, p.p. 556-557. However, in Reitlinger's *The SS—Alibi of a Nation*, Da Capo, 1989, p. 465, this is revised to read that Glücks had gone "underground." Hilberg echoes this opinion in his *Destruction of the European Jews*. However, other claims have been made to the effect that Glücks was murdered in Flensburg by the so-called "Jewish Avengers." In particular, see *The Avengers*, by Michael Ben Zohar, as well as Martin Gilbert, who writes: "On May 10, in Flensburg naval hospital, SS General Richard Glücks, head of the concentration camp directorate, was found dead. It was not clear whether Glücks had committed suicide, or had been killed by 'Jewish avengers' who had already begun to track down and kill a number of those who had carried out the policy of mass murder."—*The Holocaust*, Holt, Rinehardt, and Winston, N.Y., 1985, p. 811.

⁷⁷ *Op. cit.*, *The Belsen Trial*, p. 156.

A Chronicle of Holocaust Revisionism, Part 3 (1956-1960)

Thomas Kues

This is the third article in an INCONVENIENT HISTORY series (Part 1: Summer 2009; Part 2: Winter 2009) forming a chronicle of Holocaust revisionism and responses to it from the first years of the Post-War era up to the present. In the first two parts, we surveyed the first decade of Shoah skepticism, from the very first doubts, mainly concerning the 6-million-victim figure, to the first publications of revisionist pioneer and former concentration camp inmate Paul Rassinier, in which the alleged homicidal gas chambers came into focus as the central issue of dispute. Below I will continue this survey with the latter half of the 1950s. Here I am again indebted to Mr. Jean Plantin and his exhaustive documentation “Anthologie chronologique des textes révisionnistes des années quarante et cinquante” (“A Chronological Anthology of Revisionist Texts from the Forties and Fifties”).¹

1956

Background

Alain Resnais’s Holocaust documentary *Nuit et brouillard* (*Night and Fog*) is released. Lucie Adelsberger’s testimony *Auschwitz* published in Germany. Gerald Reitlinger’s book *The SS: Alibi of a Nation* is published in London. A German edition of Reitlinger’s study *The Final Solution* (*Die Endlösung*) is published in Berlin. Ota Kraus and Erich Kulka’s book *Noc a mlha*, later translated into German as *Nacht und Nebel* (*Night and Fog*), published in Prague. Helmut Krausnick’s *Dokumentation zur Massen-Ver-gasung* (*Documentation on Mass Gassing*) is published in Bonn.

Events

Undated. Leon Poliakov, in a 1956 article later appended to some reprinted editions of *Harvest of Hate* (*Breviaire de la haine*), accuses fellow Holocaust historian Gerald Reitlinger of minimizing the number of Jewish victims:

*“Finally, it should be noted that a British researcher, Gerald Reitlinger, in his work *The Final Solution* (London, 1953), questions the total of 6 million. He asserts that many of the figures were deliberately inflated for psychological reasons—both by the Nazis, who were motivated by an urge to boast of their crimes, and by the Jews, who were influenced by the pessimism typical of victims. He therefore strongly questions some of the figures given by the Nazis. By systematically re-examining the figures given for each country, adopting the lowest figure in each case by way*



*Revisionist pioneer Paul
Rassinier*

of hypothesis, he arrives at a total between a minimum of 4,200,000 and a maximum of 4,600,000. His heaviest corrections are in the figures for Eastern Poland and the Soviet Union proper. In the case of these two regions, estimates are complicated by population movements during and after the war, and by the total absence of reliable statistical data on the present Jewish population there.

In our opinion, one who devotes time and effort to making such corrections solely on the basis of psychological considerations must be motivated by similar considerations himself. In Reitlinger's case this could be explained by the typical British penchant for understatement. No doubt there always will be some uncertainty about the exact total of victims claimed by the racist madness. However, the estimated data available are sufficiently abundant and reliable for us to be able to accept, as the most probable number, the 'classic' total of 6 million.”

Historical Context

In June, Gamal Abdel Nasser becomes president of Egypt. In October, the Hungarian revolution breaks out, Red Army troops invade Hungary; Israel invades the Sinai Peninsula and backs Egyptian forces toward the Suez Canal, the United Kingdom and France begin bombing Egypt to force the reopening of the canal. The revolt in Hungary is quashed in mid-November. In December, Fidel Castro returns to Cuba.

1957

Background

The former commandant of the concentration camp (and alleged “auxiliary extermination camp”) Stutthof, Paul Werner Hoppe, is sentenced to nine years of imprisonment at a trial held in Bochum, West Germany. The former Dutch SS man Willem Sassen conducts a number of tape-recorded question-and-answer sessions with Adolf Eichmann in Buenos Aires, Argentina, supposedly for the purpose of a book on the “Final Solution.” Bruno Baum’s book *Widerstand in Auschwitz (Resistance in Auschwitz)* is published in East Berlin. Jan Sehn’s documentation *Konzentrationslager Auschwitz-Birkenau* published in Warsaw.

Events

2 September. Albert Paraz, who wrote the preface to Rassinier’s *Le mensonge d’Ulysse*, passes away, aged 57.

Historical Context

In late January Israel withdraws from the Sinai Peninsula. Eisenhower is inaugurated for a second presidential term. The Suez Canal is reopened in March. Martial law declared in Indonesia. In April, the first conscripts join the West German *Bundeswehr*. Jack Kerouac’s *On the Road* published in September. In December all Dutch nationals are expelled from Indonesia.

1958

Background

On 1 March, career criminal and former Auschwitz inmate Adolf Rögner files charges against the former *SS-Oberscharführer* Wilhelm Boger, an event which would lead to the Frankfurt Auschwitz trial. Elie Wiesel’s Auschwitz memoirs, *La nuit (Night)*, are published by Editions de Minuit in Paris. Auschwitz commandant Rudolf Höss’s memoirs, *Kommandant in Auschwitz*, are published in West Germany, edited by Martin Broszat. On 9 October, Pius XII, alleged to have been “Hitler’s Pope,” dies. The *Zentralstelle zur Verfolgung nationalsozialistischer Gewaltverbrechen* (Central Office for the resolution of National-Socialist crimes) is established in Ludwigsburg, West Germany.

Events

20 November. A letter written by Stephen F. Pinter (1888-1985) is published in the weekly *Deutsche Wochenschrift*. In his letter, Pinter questions the veracity of a recent Associated Press report stating that the ashes of 3000 Russian, French, Yugoslav and Polish victims of the concentration camp Flossenbürg had been given a reburial. Pinter states that, according on his own investigations as a judicial magistrate following the end of the war, the total number of Flossenbürg victims amounted to no more than 300 people.

Undated. Louis (Lajos) Marschalko's book *The World Conquerors. The Real War Criminals* (translated into English from a manuscript in Hungarian) is published in London by Joseph Sueli. Chapter 11 of this book is entitled "What Has Become of Six Million Jews?" Here the author discusses the origin of the six-million figure in the statements of Wilhelm Hoettl, as well as the Madagascar plan and the pre-war National Socialist policy of Jewish emigration. Marschalko considers it "unlikely" that the outbreak of the war caused a switch to a policy of extermination, while concluding that the "Final solution of the Jewish question" was territorial in nature. He further suggests that especially the eastern Jews suffered heavy losses due to the partisan warfare and reprisal actions linked to it, while generally dismissing the gas-chamber and extermination-camp allegations as propaganda. Marschalko also points out the Allied nations' curious silence on the Jewish "exterminations" during the war. Moreover the author writes (without, however, providing a source) that German POWs had to "reconstruct" a gas chamber at Dachau and also notes that the crematorium ovens at Dachau were completely inadequate for the incineration of the number of victims claimed at that time (238,000). Finally, the author disputes the six-million figure from a demographic-statistical viewpoint, based primarily on the arguments found in the 1946 *Baseler Nachrichten* article.² Special attention is given to the Hungarian Jews: Jewish claims of 600,000 dead Hungarian Jews are contrasted with a *New York Times* article stating the same number as 200,000 and official Hungarian statistics reporting losses of merely 120,000 Hungarian Jews (again the author provides no exact references). Based on reported numbers of displaced Hungarian Jews, Marschalko concludes that the real number of perished Hungarian Jews amounted to approximately 60,000 people.

Undated. The article "Entmythologisierung der 6-Millionen-Zahl" (no author given) is published in *Deutsche Hochschullehrer-Zeitung* (*German College-Teacher Newspaper*, predecessor of *Deutschland in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, *Germany in History and Present*), Vol. 6, No. 2, p. 25.

Historical Context

In February Egypt and Syria unite to form the United Arab Republic, Nasser becomes its president. Khrushchev becomes Premier of the Soviet Union in late March. In April, Castro's revolutionary army begins attacks on Havana. On June 16, Imre Nagy is hanged for treason in Hungary. In July, the Iraqi monarchy is overthrown by Arab nationalists. British and U.S. troops sent to Jordan and Lebanon. On December 31, Cuban president Fulgencio Batista resigns.

1959

Background

The construction of the concrete-block "memorial" on the former site of Treblinka II begins. Olga Lengyel's Auschwitz memoirs *Five Chimneys* are published in London. Rudolf Höss's memoirs are published in English and French.

Events

14 June 1959. A letter written by Stephen F. Pinter is published in *Our Sunday Visitor*, p. 15 under the heading "German Atrocities." In it, Pinter writes that "there were no gas chambers in any of the concentration camps in Germany," and that while he and other judicial officials had been told about "a gas chamber at Auschwitz," the Soviets had not allowed them to investigate that claim. Pinter also disputes the six-million figure, suggesting that the actual number of Jewish victims was less than one million.

1 July 1959. Austin J. App writes a letter entitled "The Inflated Figure of 6,000,000"³ addressed to the Philadelphia newspaper *The Inquirer*, in which he states the six-million figure to be a product of Soviet propaganda and completely unproven. It is unknown whether this letter was published.

Undated. The article "Dokumente zur Endlösung der Judenfrage" is published in *Deutsche Hochschullehrer-Zeitung*, Vol. 7, No. 3-4, pp. 5-13.⁴ The article does not dispute the alleged extermination per se,⁵ but suggests that it was planned and carried out by a very small group of conspirators (who are claimed by the anonymous author to have been Catholic fifth-columnists, among them the head of Gestapo Heinrich Müller and Adolf Eichmann, out to destroy Germany's honor!), and that Hitler had nothing to do with them until he somehow learned of them and ordered them stopped. The primary value of this article lies in the quotes from court material that it presents.

Undated. A German edition of Rassinier's *Le mensonge d'Ulysse* (*Die Lüge des Odysseus* or *The Lies of Ulysses*) is published in Wiesbaden by Verlag Karl Heinz Priester as part of the series "Zeitgeschichtliche Dokumentation" ("Historical Documentation").

Undated. Swedish far-right writer Einar Åberg publishes a brief pamphlet entitled "Proof That the Jewish Allegation of Hitler Having Gassed 6 Million Jews Is a Big Lie" in which he disputes the six-million figure by referring to various statistical sources, primarily the *World Almanac*.⁶

Historical Context

In January, Fidel Castro takes control over Cuba. In March, an uprising against the Chinese occupiers of Tibet erupts; the 14th Dalai Lama escapes to India. Hawaii becomes the 50th US state in August. Antarctic Treaty signed in December. Britain starts selling heavy water (a material for making nuclear weapons) to Israel. The first post-war census conducted in the USSR.

1960

Background

On May 11, Adolf Eichmann, living in Buenos Aires under the alias Ricardo Klement, is abducted by Mossad agents. A week later he is smuggled out of the country. On May 21 he reaches Israel.

Events

March. Paul Rassinier's article "'Le commandant d'Auschwitz parle'. Un document historique ou le roman chez la portière?" is published in *Défense de l'occident*, No. 3, pp. 36-44. In this article, Rassinier analyzes the recently published memoirs of the former Auschwitz commandant Rudolf Höss and compares it with his testimony from the Nuremberg Trial, highlighting a number of internal and external contradictions, while also taking note of the fact that Höss had been tortured by his British captors. Most significantly, Rassinier observed that Höss on one hand specifies the handling of the supposed killing agent Zyklon B as being very dangerous, while on the other hand he describes the members of the "*Sonderkommando*" as removing the bodies from the gas chambers immediately after the gassings, sometimes while eating and smoking (*i.e.* not wearing gas

masks), without any accidents ever occurring—an observation that years later would be further developed by Robert Faurisson.

24 March – 8 April. Rassinier holds a tour of lectures on the theme “Historical Truth or Political Truth?” in Hamburg and fourteen other West German cities, as well as Vienna.

18 June. The weekly *Deutsche Wochenzeitung* reports that Munich bishop and former Dachau inmate Dr. Johannes Neuhäusler during a press conference held in connection with the beginning of the construction of a chapel at the former camp site stated that no gas chamber had ever been put into use at Dachau, and that therefore the claim that 75,000 inmates had been gassed there was false. The bishop mentioned the official victim estimate presented by the Town of Dachau, according to which 20,000 inmates had perished in the camp, as well as the International Tracing Service’s estimate of 29,000 victims, and further stated his intention to write a pamphlet entitled “Die Wahrheit über Dachau” (“The Truth about Dachau”) to be disseminated at an upcoming ecclesiastical world congress in Munich.

July. A German translation of three recent articles and lectures by Rassinier (including the above-mentioned one on Höss), an exchange of letters with Eugen Kogon (in which Kogon threatens Rassinier, as well as his German publisher, with legal prosecution) and a foreword by the author is published in Wiesbaden by Verlag Karl Heinz Priester under the title *Was nun, Odysseus? Zur Bewältigung der Vergangenheit* (What Now, Odysseus? On Coping with the Past).

19 August. A letter from Dr. Martin Broszat of the Institute for Contemporary History (Institut für Zeitgeschichte) appears in the Hamburg weekly *Die Zeit*, stating that “Neither in Dachau nor in Bergen-Belsen nor in Buchenwald were Jews or other prisoners gassed” and that “The mass extermination of the Jews by gassing began in 1941-1942 and occurred exclusively in a few facilities selected and equipped with appropriate technical installations, above all in the occupied Polish territory (but at no place in the Old Reich).”⁷

December. An extract from Rassinier’s forthcoming book *Ulysse trahi par les siens* (Ulysses Betrayed by His Own) is published in *Lectures françaises*, No. 44-45, pp. 14-23.

Historical Context

In February, the CERN particle accelerator is inaugurated near Geneva. In March, the Sharpsville massacre takes place in South Africa. In June, Belgian Congo gains independence; civil war follows. In November, John

F. Kennedy is elected president of the United States. In December, the OECD is formed in Paris.

Commentary

By the late 1950s, Holocaust revisionism was still very much affected by the childhood diseases typical of pioneer criticism. Most seriously, many texts were unfortunately marked by a lack of exact references in accordance with standard scientific criteria. Also lacking is a focus on official reports and material deriving from court proceedings, as well as the emerging Holocaust historiography (Reitlinger, Hilberg, Poliakov); rather, most revisionist texts from this period discuss the extermination allegations as presented by the media and a relatively small number of published witness testimonies.

There are three points of special interest to be found in our survey of the years 1956-1960. The first is Poliakov's criticism of Reitlinger in 1956. Despite admitting that, with regard to the Jews in Eastern Poland and the Soviet Union "estimates are complicated by population movements during and after the war" as well as a "total absence of reliable statistical data," Poliakov—whose victim figure includes 2 million Jews exterminated at Auschwitz,⁸ whereas Reitlinger puts the same figure at between 800,000 and 900,000—staunchly defended "the 'classic' total of 6 million," which had emerged as a dogmatic figure already during the Nuremberg trial.

The second point is Rassinier's pioneering analysis of Höss's memoirs. Here is reached a milestone in the development of Holocaust revisionism, namely the emergence of a discussion on the technical feasibility of the alleged mass gassings. This new focus would naturally give the revisionists an upper hand, as the early Holocaust historians had not at all considered the physical realities bearing on their claims.

The third and last point is the 1960 Broszat letter. The final paragraph of this text makes it clear that it was written as a response to early revisionism (Broszat does not name Rassinier or any other revisionist writer, but instead speaks of "some ineducable people" who "make use of a few arguments that, while correct, are polemically taken out of context"). This shows that Holocaust historians were aware of the revisionists already from the start, and that by 1960 they had already adopted the strategy of discreetly cutting out the most untenable parts of the gas chamber mythos (without even for a moment considering the evidential foundation of the remainder) while avoiding naming the revisionists whose writings made these tactical retreats necessary.

Notes

- ¹ *Études révisionnistes*, vol. 2, Cercle antitotalitaire, Saint-Genis-Laval 2002, pp.118-235.
- ² See the first part of this article series (Summer 2009).
- ³ Available online at: <https://codoh.com/library/document/the-inflated-figure-of-6000000-1959/>
- ⁴ The full text of this article is available online at: <https://codoh.com/library/document/dokumente-zur-endlosung-der-judenfrage/>
- ⁵ It does however bring the six-million figure into question, citing an article by an unnamed Jewish statistician reportedly appearing in the San Diego, California publication *The Broom* in May 1952, according to which there were merely 350,000 – 500,000 Jewish deaths. How such a low figure fits with the presented conspiracy theory is not made clear.
- ⁶ A Spanish translation of the pamphlet is found in an online Spanish edition of Thies Christophersen's *Die Auschwitz-Lüge*, as an appendix on pp. 39-40: <https://codoh.com/media/files/downloads/livres5/Thieses.pdf>
- ⁷ The full text of the letter is reproduced online at: <https://codoh.com/library/document/no-gassing-in-dachau/>
- ⁸ Léon Poliakov, *Bréviare de la haine*, Calmann-Lévy, Paris 1951, pp. 231-232.

Christianity, Judaism and German National Socialism: Revisionism Confronts the Theology of Susannah Heschel

Paul Grubach

In the interest of fairness, Susannah Heschel was sent the following essay prior to its publication here, and asked to correct any possibly false or misleading statements. Ms. Heschel has not responded.

Does Theology Matter?

Even atheists and skeptics admit that Christianity and the other equally influential religions exert a decisive impact upon world affairs. A leading historian of the ancient world, Michael Grant, in his history of the Jewish people during the Roman era, pinpointed religion's effect upon mankind with this astute observation:¹

"For religion is an immensely significant part of secular history: whether god-given or delusive, its beliefs and cults have guided people more powerfully than any other force."

The premier skeptic, eighteenth-century Scottish philosopher David Hume, would agree. Although he contended that Christianity was "superstition," he also seriously doubted that it could ever be eliminated, as it would continue to exercise its influence far into future centuries.²

Regardless of one's religious or anti-religious beliefs, one must accept that the Christian religion—along with Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism and others—will continue to exert a decisive impact upon human affairs long after all of us are dead and gone. Whether you like it or not, theology really matters.

Susannah Heschel, a Jewish theologian and researcher into Christian-Jewish relations, is widely considered to be a leading authority on Christian theology in National Socialist Germany, having published a long list of studies on this topic. Her most recent book (and probably her most important), *The Aryan Jesus: Christian Theologians and the Bible in Nazi Germany*, received very favorable reviews in mainstream publications. As the present century marches on, the issues of Christianity's relationship to the Judaic religion, the Jewish people, and racial nationalism are becoming

ever more important. This is one reason why Heschel's writings are of great interest, as her research addresses these topics.

The following essay is not an attempt to prove that Christianity is either true or false, or to convert anyone to any religious or anti-religious belief. Our purpose is to address (at least in part) these issues: Are there social, political or religious factors that are distorting Susannah Heschel's theological viewpoints? Does Susannah Heschel—like many other intellectuals and politicians in the West—apply a hypocritical double standard to the Jewish religion, National Socialism, Israel and the Zionist movement? Is Heschel's view of Christianity's relationship to Judaism accurate? Was there any truth to some of the religious viewpoints of Germany's National Socialist theologians? Was Jesus Christ really Jewish or was he of another ethnicity? Did the Evangelist Paul attempt to turn Christianity into a "Jewish religion?" Was at least some of what the National Socialist theologians believed consistent with a Christian message? What do Christianity and Judaism teach about ethnic nationalism? On what theological issues were the National Socialist theologians in error? Are there any similarities between Judaism and National Socialism? Are Judaism and National Socialism similar in their opposition to miscegenation? Are Jewish studies of Christianity motivated by an ulterior agenda? Are many Jews the enemy of Jesus Christ and Christianity? Was Jesus Christ really a militant opponent of the Jewish religion as some National Socialists claimed?

These are not idle questions. Indeed, the future political and religious landscape of the world will be impacted by theological issues of this nature.

Susannah Heschel: Her Ethnic/Religious/Political Background and Ideological Biases

Susannah Heschel is the daughter of the prominent Jewish scholar and religious activist Abraham Joshua Heschel (1907-1972), who was born in Poland, fled Europe in 1939 and subsequently became a US citizen.³ He is generally considered to be one of the most important theologians of Judaism of his era. In the 1960s, he became an ardent supporter of the Black American movement for racial integration, as he marched with Martin Luther King Jr. in Selma, Alabama.⁴ Like many other Jewish intellectuals and activists in his camp, he operated with a hypocritical double standard. Rabbi Heschel worked to create a racially integrated society in the United States. Yet, he was a zealous supporter of what Israeli scholar Uri Davis has shown to be the racially/ethnically segregated state of Israel. Indeed, the title of Davis's book says it all—*Israel: An Apartheid State*.⁵

The elder Heschel even wrote a religious tract, *Israel: An Echo of Eternity*, devoted to the racist Jewish country in the Middle East: daughter Susannah gave her endorsement to the book, as she wrote an approving Introduction in a later edition.⁶ Although Ms. Heschel claims that her father spoke out against the oppression of Palestinians by Israel in the years prior to his death, he still viewed the Zionist state with mystical reverence. This statement typifies his beliefs:⁷

"For all who read the Hebrew Bible with biblical eyes the state of Israel is a solemn intimation of God's trace in history."

Throughout his life, Abraham Heschel attempted to articulate a religious position for left-wing Zionists and Israelis.⁸

Currently, Susannah Heschel is the Eli Black Professor of Jewish Studies at Dartmouth College. She has a very strong Jewish identity, having written:⁹

"I have a passion for Jewishness, for every manifestation of it, from Workmen's Circle to Chasidic shtetls. My passion came to me as mother's milk, from wanting to emulate the Jews around me."

In 2005, the Jewish weekly *Forward* identified her as a candidate for the World Zionist Congress. She was then a member of The Green Zionist Alliance, which was described as advocating "an environmentalist-peace slate."¹⁰ Her political position is similar to her father's, and can be depicted as leftist-religious-Zionist.

In her 1998 study of the nineteenth-century Jewish theologian and historian Abraham Geiger, Heschel revealed the decisive influence that her religious/cultural surroundings had upon her outlook:¹¹

"Above all, I have come to understand the history of Jewish-Christian relations in Germany through the German Jews I have been privileged to meet since my childhood."

In her most recent book, *The Aryan Jesus*, she again reveals where many of her views came from:¹²

"My childhood home was filled with German-Jewish refugee scholars who vividly illuminated for me the intellectual world that was destroyed. I want to thank my father for conveying to me a taste of the Germany he experienced in the 1920s and '30s, and for constantly reminding me, Never Despair!"

There is little doubt that Heschel's views have been profoundly shaped by a Judeocentric interpretation of the Jewish-German conflict of the Second World War.

In Germany during the era of the Third Reich, she rightly points out that “theological scholarship was also shaped by contemporary politics.”¹³ As we shall soon see, “contemporary politics” also impacts her theological scholarship. Although Heschel’s books and essays are well written, interesting and intellectually stimulating, she lets her Jewish identity and Zionist politics act as distorting influences upon her work.

Professor Heschel emphasizes how the Holocaust ideology traumatized her. She says that family members were murdered by the Germans:¹⁴

“Within my family certain horrors stood out. The murder of family members was so terrible that it was discussed only rarely, perhaps once in five years, and then only in whispers. Mentioning even briefly what had happened to my grandmother, for example, caused a depression that hung over our household for days.”

She experienced a sense of horror while examining documents in the Central Archives of the Protestant Church, located in the former West Berlin, which dealt with the activities and beliefs of bishops, pastors, and professors who were passionately opposed to the Jewish people during the Third Reich. After hearing the archivist defend the activities and claims of these pro-National-Socialist Germans and the German cause, she “trembled uncontrollably,” and the next morning “woke up covered with hives.”¹⁵

Heschel’s theological viewpoints are profoundly shaped by the assumption that the traditional Holocaust story is an unquestionable fact. She emphasizes that “the Nazi regime carried out its genocide of the Jews” during “the six years of its existence,” and was “deeply moved” by her German friends’ “understanding of the enormity of German crimes.”¹⁶ And of course, she firmly believes the Germans murdered Jews in “gas chambers” with Zyklon B gas.¹⁷ Taking a quote from her father, Heschel writes that “Auschwitz is in our [the Jewish people’s] veins.”¹⁸

Heschel ignores the fact that her traditional Holocaust story is not only a feeble ideology that cannot be substantiated with physical/forensic evidence, but also, much of it can be shown to be false. Consider this. In December 2009, one of the widely recognized authorities on the Auschwitz concentration camp, Robert Jan van Pelt, admitted that: “Ninety-nine per cent of what we know [about the Auschwitz extermination story] we do not actually have the physical evidence to prove[...].” Professor van Pelt added this most telling statement:¹⁹

“We in the future—remembering the Holocaust—will operate in the same way that we remember most things from the past. We will know about it from literature and eyewitness testimony [...].”

Here we have a Dutch-Jewish academic who was recognized by the British legal system as an expert on the alleged Auschwitz “gas chamber” technology, admitting that there really is no physical/scientific evidence to prove that those “homicidal gas chambers” ever existed! The “truth” of the orthodox Auschwitz extermination story is ultimately based upon eyewitness testimony—really no different from a religious dogma that has only eyewitness testimony to substantiate it. Other genocidal mass killings of the past, such as the Katyn Forest massacre committed by the Soviet Secret Police in the 1940s, have abundant, undeniable physical/forensic evidence to prove that they actually occurred.²⁰

Furthermore, much like other influential intellectuals of her persuasion, Heschel overlooks all the scientific evidence that discredits the traditional Holocaust story. As an example, consider the revisionist studies of the alleged Auschwitz “gas chambers.” Fred Leuchter was at one time the main authority on gas-chamber technology in the United States. Though flawed, his forensic study of the “Auschwitz extermination technology” dealt a damaging blow to this legend.²¹ A more thorough and scientifically accurate study of the Auschwitz “gas chambers” was carried out by the German scientist Germar Rudolf. Rudolf’s meticulous inquiry showed beyond a reasonable doubt that the traditional Auschwitz extermination story is false.²² The present German government was unable to refute Rudolf’s expert report and his other Revisionist studies of the “Holocaust” with reason and evidence. The only thing they could do is imprison him for telling the truth.

In a series of well documented and skillfully argued studies, Revisionist historians Carlo Mattogno and Jürgen Graf discredited the claim that “homicidal mass gassings” of Jews took place at the Treblinka, Majdanek and Belzec concentration camps.²³ Heschel and her group of pro-Zionist intellectuals have conveniently ignored all of the foregoing Revisionist evidence.

Heschel criticized the Christian Church’s past ideological dominance, as she referred to “the institutional power of the [Christian] church that transformed falsehoods into accepted truth, a system of power that more recent theorists have termed an ‘ideological regime.’”²⁴ In the Western world of the past, Heschel continues, “the dominant ideology was a Christian one, attempting to present itself as secular moral and cultural values and equating Christianity with the highest expression of religion, rather than as one particular religion whose claims required justification before the bar of reason and historical investigation.”²⁵

Likewise, a very similar statement could be used to describe Heschel's traditional view of the Holocaust. The institutional power of the Jewish-Zionist power elite has transformed "Holocaust" falsehoods into accepted truth, a system of power that could be rightly termed an "ideological regime of the Holocaust." The only unquestionable ideology in the Western World today is that of the "Holocaust," as it has been elevated to the status of a secular religion. In the Western world, the Holocaust religion does not require justification before the bar of reason and historical investigation. Quite the contrary! It cannot even be disputed in "respectable" forums. Belief in it is strictly enforced with taboos, underhanded tactics and prison sentences in many European nations for people who dispute it. Indeed, in America and Europe the Holocaust is to be slavishly accepted as "historical fact," and any "Holocaust deniers" are to be persecuted and/or denied a public forum in mainstream discourse. The intolerant Holocaust religion is the ideological backdrop of Heschel's theological and historical views.

Rarely does Heschel point out where the National Socialist intellectuals put forth an accurate viewpoint. Much of the time she simply condemns and demonizes them, implicitly or explicitly. Yet, whether she is aware of it or not, some of her declarations actually support National Socialist viewpoints. Consider this example. Heschel admits that the Jewish community is an alien element among Christian European societies, for she wrote:²⁶

"Although the Jews did not constitute a territorial colony of Europe, they formed an internal colony in Europe, under the domination of Christian powers."

Later on in the same essay she adds:²⁷

"As much as Jews are inside the Christian world, they are also outsiders; they occupy a position of ambivalence and ambiguity that functions as a kind of counter-history to the multicultural account of the West: not all White Europeans are Christians."

Interestingly enough, this is similar to the belief of an intellectual forefather of National Socialist ideology, Paul de Lagarde (whom Heschel refers to twice in *The Aryan Jesus*). In the words of George L. Mosse, a Jewish historian whose research Heschel relies upon:²⁸

"Lagarde felt that their religion kept Jews separate, and that they were in fact a coherent and dangerous minority within the Christian state."

Finally, as we shall see in the following, Heschel's writings are plagued with a hypocritical double standard. She condemns (implicitly or explicitly) aspects of German National Socialism that are also characteristic of her own beliefs and the sources of her identity—Jewish culture and Israel.

Zionism and National Socialism: Heschel's Hypocritical Double Standard on the Race Issue

In her books and essays Heschel sends the message that ethnic/racial nationalism is evil and bad for non-Jews, while at the same time she supports ethnic nationalism—that is, Zionism—for Jews. Heschel is also a critic of White Christian civilization, for she has written:²⁹

“When the story of male, white, Christian Western civilization is related, should not its cultural glories be tempered with the evidence of its racism and misogyny?”

Likewise with Heschel's Judaism: when the story of Jewish history is related, should not its cultural glories be tempered with the evidence of its racism and misogyny?

In her magnum opus, *The Aryan Jesus*, she consistently condemns as “racist” non-Jewish movements of racial nationalism, like German National Socialism and the former South African Apartheid society.³⁰ Yet, I cannot find anywhere where she specifically condemns Jewish-Zionist ethnic nationalism and ethnic/racial segregation in Israel. Quite the contrary! She ardently supports the apartheid Zionist state.

To be fair, Heschel has criticized certain actions of the Zionist movement and Israeli government, but makes it clear that she is a “strong Zionist.” We give you Susannah Heschel in her own words from a October 2002 essay:³¹

“Many of us on campus are deeply critical of what we consider to be gross violations of human rights committed by Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, and yet we are strong Zionists. Unlike the Likud Party, we believe two states need to be established, Israel and Palestine, for reasons of politics, security and morality.”

Heschel piously insists she wants to follow in her father's footsteps, as she chooses to raise her daughters with “the spirit of Selma [Alabama].”³² (This is the Southern city in the United States where Martin Luther King Jr. marched to achieve racial integration.) That is, she wants to instill in her descendants a desire to build egalitarian and racially integrated societies—everywhere outside of her beloved Israel. In regard to the Jewish state in the Middle East her “morality” demands that she supports segregation, where Jews and Palestinian Arabs would live in separate states.

A recent US State Department report shows that the object of Heschel's ethnic/religious identity, Israel, is an intolerant society that discriminates against non-Jews and where Jewish supremacy is the order of the day—a fact that is in total conflict with her left-wing politics. The Zionist state

falls short in tolerance toward minorities, equal treatment of ethnic groups, openness toward various streams within society, and respect for holy and other sites. The US State Department's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor documented how Israel discriminates against Muslims, Jehovah's Witnesses, Reform Jews, Christians, women and Bedouin people. According to this comprehensive report, "the government implements regulations only for Jewish sites. Non-Jewish holy sites do not enjoy legal protection under it because the government does not recognize them as official holy sites." Among other examples, the report notes that more than 300,000 immigrants who are not considered Jewish under rabbinical law are not allowed to marry and divorce or be buried in Jewish cemeteries.³³

Furthermore, Israeli law distinguishes between "citizenship" and "nationality." This legal artifice gives Jews special privileges that non-Jews are deprived of. The special status of "Jewish nationality" has been a way to undermine the citizenship rights of non-Jews, especially the fifth of the population who are Arab. Some thirty laws specifically favor Jews to the detriment of others, including in the areas of immigration rights, naturalization, access to land and employment.³⁴ Despite the fact that the racial-integrationist "spirit of Selma, Alabama" is totally absent in Israel, the Jewish state still captivates Heschel's allegiance.

The "anti-racist" Heschel supports her father's condemnation of "racism." She emphatically repeats what the elder Heschel preached: "Racism is Satanism, unmitigated evil[...]"³⁵ If this is so, then daughter Heschel should abandon her Zionism, as it is a philosophy and violent movement that is firmly grounded in the anti-integrationist racial thought of the past and present.³⁶ Echoing the feelings of a large number of Jews, the prominent Zionist leader Stephen S. Wise, a former president of the American Jewish Congress and the World Jewish Congress, told a New York rally in June 1938: "I am not an American citizen of the Jewish faith, I am a Jew[...]Hitler was right in one thing. He calls the Jewish people a race and we are a race."³⁷

Heschel refers to "Germany's military and racial goals of domination over Europe."³⁸ Likewise with her Zionist movement—their racial goal was the domination of land occupied by Palestinian Arabs. With the use of archival evidence, Israeli historians Simha Flapan and Ilan Pappé have demonstrated that from its very inception a central plank of Israel's founding ideology was the forcible removal of Palestinian Arabs and the creation of an ethnically homogenous, Jewish supremacist state.³⁹

In the words of a prophet of Zionism, Moses Hess, "Jews are not a religious group, but a separate nation, a special race, and the modern Jew who

denies this is not only an apostate, a religious renegade, but a traitor to his people, his tribe, his race.”⁴⁰ In a similar vein, the founder of modern Zionism, Theodore Herzl, wrote: “I referred previously to our [Jewish] assimilation [with gentiles]. I do not for a moment wish to imply that I desire such an end. Our national character is too glorious in history and, in spite of every degradation, too noble to make its annihilation desirable.”⁴¹ This is very significant. Both Heschels, the father and daughter, worked to promote racial integration and assimilation between whites and non-whites in the United States. Yet, both are on record as propounding an ideology that opposes integration and assimilation between Jews and non-Jews. Indeed, as the Jewish weekly *Forward* recently pointed out, separation between Jews and Palestinians is an integral platform of left-wing Zionism—the political movement that Susannah Heschel is a part of.⁴²

Heschel is fond of pointing out how National Socialism discriminated against Jews, but she fails to note that very similar discriminatory practices against non-Jews are in place in the Israeli state that has captivated her devotion. She says that Christian churches failed to condemn the Nazi laws that put Jews into a separate racial category and also banned non-Aryans from the German civil service.⁴³ Yet, almost-identical laws are in place in her beloved Israel. In the Zionist state, racial categorization begins at birth. As the Israeli scholar Uri Davis has pointed out, the law is set up in such a manner that a Jewish infant is registered as having Israeli citizenship at birth, whereas an Arab newborn is stateless at birth, his citizenship status being indefinite.⁴⁴

American-Jewish scholar Ian Lustick pointed out that the Israeli military is, by and large, a segregated institution. Most Muslim Arabs, who constitute the overwhelming majority of Israeli Arab citizens, do not serve in the armed forces—they are not conscripted, nor are they permitted to volunteer for service. This has important social consequences. In Israel, participation in the armed services is a prerequisite to social advancement and mobility. Cut off from the military, they are cut off from access to one of the main avenues of social advancement.⁴⁵ Just as National Socialist laws banned Jews from the German civil service, so too do Israeli practices and laws ban Arabs from social advancement and upward mobility.

As the evolutionary psychologist Kevin MacDonald has cogently argued, German National Socialism and Jewish Zionism are mirror images of each other—something that the Abraham and Susannah Heschels of the world do not admit.⁴⁶ It is clearly hypocritical for Heschel to act as a critic of National Socialist ethnic nationalism and discriminatory practices against Jews while she herself passionately identifies with a state and ide-

ology that espouses a similar ethnic nationalism for Jews and practices a similar discrimination against non-Jews. In all of her work, Heschel never explains why (in her view) it was “morally wrong” for Germans to have been racial nationalists (*i.e.*, National Socialists), yet, it was and is “morally correct” for Jews to be racial nationalists (*i.e.*, Zionists). Professor Heschel, a theologian well immersed in religious ethics, never explains the moral dichotomy she has brought to light. Why it was “morally wrong” for Germans to have supported a National Socialist state that discriminated against Jews: yet, it is “morally correct” for Jews to ardently support a Zionist state that discriminates against non-Jews. This hypocritical racial double standard plagues all of her work.

Heschel’s Depiction of Christianity in National-Socialist Germany

During the era of the Third Reich, there were two major competing factions within German Protestantism. The Confessing Church held that the Old Testament, with its Jewish origins, formed a permanent part of the Christian religion. Although they were critical of Jewish influence, Confessing Church clerics accepted Jews who had undergone the rite of baptism into the Christian religion.⁴⁷ Nonetheless, most members of this faction maintained support for the National Socialist government and they believed that Jews and Judaism were a degenerate moral and spiritual influence upon Christians.⁴⁸

The German Christians promoted a more radical, racial-ethnic oriented Christianity. They linked religion with ethnicity, which Heschel admits is also characteristic of Judaism.⁴⁹ They were adamantly opposed to the Jews, and many of them contended that Jesus was not Jewish, and the Old Testament should be expunged from the Christian canon of sacred literature.⁵⁰ Even so, at least some of them believed that there was religious value to the Old Testament, but its “Jewish spirit” needed to be eliminated. In a 1940 German Christian catechism it was stated:⁵¹

“What do we think of the Old Testament? Just as in a field grain and weeds grow together, so the Old Testament contains good and evil. We have reverence for its eternal truths about God, but we exterminate its Jewish spirit root and branch.”

The German Christians also insisted that large portions of the New Testament needed to be revised in order to reconcile it with their racist National Socialism.⁵² The German Christian movement rejected the idea of the Confessing Church that once a Jew had undergone the rite of Baptism he became a Christian.⁵³ The movement’s leaders believed that Baptism could not wipe away the imprint of race or ethnicity. On key issues the

German Christians stood in opposition to the Confessing Church, and there was tension between the two factions throughout the Third Reich.⁵⁴

Heschel maintains that German Catholicism was in a position similar to that of the Confessing Church. Being theologically conservative, they refused to alter basic Christian doctrines, but nevertheless, they still maintained that Jews were a negative influence upon Christians.⁵⁵

In May 1939, a group of German Christian clerics, churchgoers and theologians founded the Institute for the Study and Eradication of Jewish Influence on German Church Life (hereafter referred to as “the Institute”). The Institute’s goal’s were to rid Christianity of Jewish influence, and to redefine Christianity as a Germanic religion whose founder, Jesus, was no Jew, but an enemy of the Jews, who had fought to destroy Judaism, but in the end fell as a victim in that struggle.⁵⁶ Some members of this National Socialist think tank went so far as to claim that Jesus Christ was an Aryan, and Paul, as a Jew, had falsified Jesus’s message.⁵⁷

The Institute’s academic director, Walter Grundmann, was a prolific scholar and professor of New Testament and Völkish Theology at the University of Jena.⁵⁸ He declared that just as Luther had overcome Catholicism during the Reformation, so too did Protestants have to overcome Judaism. This meant that the Bible would have to be purged of the Old Testament—a platform that Confessing Church theologians rejected.⁵⁹ In the post World War II era, Grundmann was an informant for the communist secret police in East Germany.⁶⁰ To Susannah Heschel, Grundmann is a Satanic figure who is guilty of spreading propaganda lies. We shall see if this is so later on in this essay.

The preceding depiction of Christianity during the Third Reich is based solely upon Professor’s Heschel’s writings. It may thus be assumed to be reasonably accurate.

Christianity’s Relationship to Judaism: Is Heschel’s View Correct?

In response to the Institute’s attempt to wipe out Jewish influence upon Christianity—that is, to “dejudaize” it—Heschel proposed an opposing view on the association between the two religions. In her theological outlook, Christianity is inextricably bound to Judaism, for she stated: “Christianity depends on Judaism for its central theological concepts.”⁶¹ She developed this theme more completely in *The Aryan Jesus*: “The question of the dejudaization effort of the Institute has to be examined not only in terms of Third Reich politics, but as a Christian theological phenomenon that engaged a vast number of pastors, bishops, and academic theologians. Christianity came into being by resting on the theological foundations of Judaism; it is often said that Judaism and Christianity stand in mother-

daughter relationship. Nearly every central theological concept of Christianity rests on a Jewish foundation, from messiah to divine election. Affirming what is central to Christian teaching usually entails an affirmation of a Jewish idea or a text from the Old Testament, so that attempting to eradicate the Jewish was a kind of ‘theological bulimia.’”⁶²

Heschel’s view is contradicted by that of one of her mentors, Abraham Geiger. In a discussion of the work and arguments of this nineteenth-century Jewish historian who wrote extensively on the historical background of Jesus and early Judaism, she stated:⁶³

“The later dogma of Christian theology concerning Jesus—the virgin birth, the Incarnation, the Resurrection—were later theological inventions that resulted from pagan philosophical influences.”

So, in *The Aryan Jesus* she says that “nearly every central theological concept of Christianity rests on Jewish foundation, from messiah to divine election.” Yet, in another book, she repeats the claim of a researcher who said that the most important dogmas of Christian theology—the Virgin Birth, the Incarnation, and the Resurrection—did not rest on a Jewish foundation, but were acquired from non-Jewish sources: Heschel never said that this was false.

Directly refuting Heschel, some of the most important concepts of Christianity are totally foreign to Judaism. The central doctrine of the Trinity—three persons in one God (the Father, Son and Holy Spirit)—does not rest on a Jewish foundation. Heschel noted that before the fourteenth century, Judaism legally classified Christianity as “idolatry” for its trinitarianism.⁶⁴ The Incarnation is another prime example—God became a human being in the person of Jesus Christ. Skeptics of the past, such as Voltaire, have pointed out that the Jewish religion regarded the idea of a God-man as “monstrous.” These non-Christians contend that this Christian concept was borrowed from pagan sources such as the Romans, who deified mortals.⁶⁵

The late Holocaust historian Raul Hilberg also noted that the idea of a God-man is anathema to Judaism. This Jewish intellectual’s view of Christian origins is much more accurate than Heschel’s.⁶⁶

“In the very early stages of the Christian faith, many Jews regarded Christians as members of a Jewish sect. The first Christians, after all, still observed the Jewish law. They had merely added a few nonessential practices, such as baptism, to their religious faith. But their view was changed abruptly when Christ was elevated to Godhood. The Jews have only one God. This God is indivisible. He is a jealous God and admits of no other gods. He is not Christ, and Christ is not He. Christi-

anity and Judaism have since been irreconcilable. An acceptance of Christianity has since signified an abandonment of Judaism."

Hilberg's view is supported by the statement in John 5: 18. It is said that the Jews wanted to kill Jesus Christ because he put himself on the level of God:

"This was why the Jews sought all the more to kill him, because he not only broke the Sabbath, but also called God his Father, making himself equal with God."

Even if, as some skeptics say, this passage is not historically accurate because the event depicted never happened, it still accurately expresses one reason why religious Jews have rejected the Christian religion throughout the ages: the thought of a God-man is abhorrent to them. The Incarnation, arguably the most important concept in all of Christianity, does not rest on a Jewish foundation. Directly contradicting Heschel, Christianity does not depend upon Judaism for this central theological concept.

The central Christian doctrine of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ (Mark 13: 1-37) does not rest on a Jewish foundation. Judaism contends that he was a mere mortal who will never return to earth. Contrary to what Heschel claims, affirming this doctrine does not also entail affirming a Jewish idea.

We have identified three central Christian concepts—the Trinity, Incarnation and Second Coming—that do not rest on a Jewish foundation, which discredits Heschel's claim that "nearly every central theological concept of Christianity rests on a Jewish foundation, from messiah to divine election." To be fair, it could be said that the doctrine of the Resurrection rests on a Jewish foundation. Catholic scholars point out that it was expressed in Daniel 12: 1-3 and other passages in the Old Testament.

It is important to point out that even where a Christian teaching entails affirming or quoting a text from the Old Testament, the Christian teaching many times contradicts Jewish teachings. Let me give three examples.

Although the Virgin Birth from Matthew 1: 22-23 is based upon a passage from the Old Testament, it is a uniquely Christian interpretation of a passage from Isaiah 7: 14. Jews throughout the ages have rejected this interpretation. The central Christian theological concept of Christ being the prophesied messiah of the Old Testament has been adamantly rejected by Jews down through the ages. Jews say that Christians misinterpreted the meaning of the messiah foretold by the Prophets. Christians say otherwise, as it is the Jews who fail to accept that Jesus is the Divine Savior foretold by the Hebrew Scriptures. Even here, as one of Heschel's mentors, the

Jewish historian Abraham Geiger, pointed out, Christians and Jews give the messiah doctrine two different and irreconcilable interpretations.⁶⁷

A scholar of ancient history, Michael Grant, provided another example. He notes that the Evangelist Paul, by appealing to various Old Testament texts, believed that the crucifixion of Jesus made possible the forgiveness of men's sins. Yet even though Paul used beliefs from Jewish Scriptures to bolster his argument, the end result was still incompatible with Jewish thinking. We let Professor Grant complete the story:⁶⁸

"For all Paul's Pharisaic background, it was an argument singularly unacceptable to the Jews, because belief in the expiatory death of Jesus clashed with the great prophetic doctrine according to which God vouchsafed the penitent sinner his free forgiveness—a doctrine which, according to Jewish thought, was the only real remedy for sin."

Christianity did indeed come from Judaism, as it was founded within a Jewish milieu. Paul made this perfectly clear in his Letter to the Romans 3:2:

"To begin with, the Jews are entrusted with the oracles of God."

Even the Gospel of John (4:22), which is very critical of the Jews, says that "salvation comes from the Jews." The list of Old Testament ideas and allusions in the New Testament are numerous. But this does not mean that Christianity is therefore forever bound to and fully compatible with Judaism. Lutheranism and Catholicism came from the same source, but centuries ago there was a split because of the irreconcilable differences between them: so too is the split between Judaism and Christianity even more pronounced because of the even greater irreconcilable differences. The Jewish Talmud provides us with even more good reasons why we should reject Heschel's claim that Judaism and Christianity stand in a "mother-daughter relationship."

The reader must understand how important the Talmud is to Judaism and the Jewish people. Adin Steinsaltz, Talmudic authority and former Head of the Israel Institute for Talmudic Publications, explained:⁶⁹

"If the Bible is the cornerstone of Judaism, then the Talmud is the central pillar, soaring up from the foundations and supporting the entire spiritual and intellectual edifice. In many ways the Talmud is the most important book in Jewish culture, the backbone of creativity and national life. No other work has had a comparable influence on the theory and practice of Jewish life, shaping spiritual content and serving as a guide to conduct. The Jewish people have always been keenly aware that their continued survival and development depend on the study of

the Talmud, and those hostile to Judaism have also been cognizant of this fact."

As far back as 1892, the Russian Roman Catholic Priest I. B. Pranaitis uncovered the hate for Jesus Christ and the anti-Christian beliefs that characterize the Talmud.⁷⁰ Pranaitis's research has been subsequently confirmed by more recent scholarship. Professor Peter Schäfer, who is the head of Princeton University's Judaic Studies Program, devoted an entire book to this issue.

The Talmud says that Jesus is punished in Hell for eternity by being made to sit in a cauldron of boiling excrement. That image appears in early manuscripts of the Babylonian Talmud, as does a brief account of Jesus's trial and execution—not by the Romans but by the Jewish high court, the Sanhedrin. The Jewish community, to the extent Jews were even aware of these excised texts, has been content to let them remain obscure and unknown. The Talmud's scattered portrait of Jesus unapologetically mocks Christian doctrines including the virgin birth and the resurrection. The rabbinic invective is meant to insult Christianity. In his book, Schäfer calls the Talmud's assault on Christian claims "devastating."⁷¹ In her declaration on the relation of Christianity to Judaism, Heschel omits consideration that the Talmud contains some of the most degrading statements on Jesus Christ and Christian religion that one will ever read.

Schäfer's study makes it clear that the Talmud is every bit as offensive to Christians as the Gospels are to Jews. Indeed, the historian of ancient Judaism and Christianity, Michael Grant, contends that "despite [the Christian Gospels'] insistence on the Judaism of Jesus, all four Gospels are at the same time markedly, indeed violently, anti-Jewish."⁷² Jews throughout the ages maintained that the Christian Scriptures are very offensive. Likewise with Christians: they find the Jewish Scriptures to be very offensive. This fact alone undermines Heschel's belief that Christianity is inextricably bound to Judaism.

The German Christian View of the Relation between Judaism and Christianity

In April 1939, the German Christians published the Godesburg Declaration. In it we find this key passage:⁷³

"What is the relation between Judaism and Christianity? Is Christianity derived from Judaism and its continuation and completion, or does Christianity stand in opposition to Judaism? We answer this question: Christianity is the unbridgeable religious opposition to Judaism."

The German Christians were somewhat mistaken on this issue. Christianity was derived from Judaism—this is a bridge between the two. Yet, Christianity evolved into a religion that is, in many ways, irreconcilable with Judaism. On the other hand, Heschel is also wrongheaded. If Heschel wants to claim that Christianity and Judaism “stand in a mother-daughter relationship,” then it is a case in which the “mother” (Judaism) came to hate and despise her own “daughter” (Christianity), and vice versa: the antagonistic “daughter” ultimately cut herself off from her hostile “mother.”

We have already noted that in her attempt to rebut the German Christians, Heschel wrote:

“Christianity came into being by resting on the theological foundations of Judaism.”

This is only partly correct. As the German Protestant theologian Rudolph Bultmann (who opposed Hitler’s National Socialist regime), and historian of Christianity Robert M. Grant have so convincingly shown, Christianity had its roots in the Old Testament and the Jewish tradition. However, contact with other religions and philosophies—Hellenistic paganism, Near Eastern religions, Stoicism, and Gnosticism—added much to the foundation of the early Christian movement.⁷⁴ Christianity came into being by resting on some of the theological foundations of Judaism, and also upon theological sources that were separate from the traditional Jewish religion. Believing Christians say that that the latter sources are also of supernatural origin, but the Jews have rejected them.

It is interesting to note that both Heschel and her opponent, the anti-Christian National Socialist ideologist Alfred Rosenberg, made almost identical claims. Rosenberg preached that Christianity’s central teachings were Jewish.⁷⁵ Heschel advocates a similar creed.⁷⁶ As the preceding discussion shows, both are mistaken.

“[B]y rejecting selected doctrines about Jesus, theologians easily could manipulate the gospel texts and revise them to construct a Jesus in their own image.”⁷⁷

Interestingly enough, a similar charge may be reflected right back at Heschel: by rejecting selected Christian doctrines, she could easily manipulate Christian history and theology and revise them to construct a Christian religion into an image that serves her own agenda. A major intent of Heschel’s research is to find out “how German Protestantism benefited from Nazi racism.”⁷⁸ A quite similar question is raised by this study: how does Heschel’s racist Jewish-Zionism benefit from her distorted theological beliefs? To this issue we must now turn our attention.

What Is the Goal of Jewish Studies of Christianity?

German Christians associated with the Institute alleged that Jews throughout the centuries distorted and falsified the Christian religion. Expounding upon this theme, Heschel writes:⁷⁹

"Paranoia about Jewish power over Christianity was regnant in their [the Institute's] theology; the Jews had falsified the message of Jesus, judaizing the gospels with their interpolations of Jewish teachings that went contrary to the anti-Jewish campaign launched by Jesus. Christianity required purification from Jewish influences in order to recover the original, true meaning [...]."

To be sure, the Institute did, at times, engage in exaggeration and distortion. Nonetheless, their concerns about Jewish attempts to twist the meaning of the Gospels were not unfounded. Heschel herself has indirectly confirmed this. Let us quote exactly what Heschel has claimed was an original intent of Jewish religious studies:⁸⁰

"[T]he first practitioners of Jewish studies saw the study of Judaism as not simply an addition to the general curriculum but as a revision of that curriculum, an effort to resist and even overthrow the standard portrayal of Western history. In this version, at the heart of the West would stand the Hebrew Bible and rabbinic literature, not the classical Greek civilization of the New Testament, and the history of Christian thought would be presented as a derivatory offshoot of Jewish ideas."

In other words, the aim of Jewish studies was to make Judaism and rabbinic ideas dominant in Christian theology and history—a claim consistent with belief of the Institute that certain Jews were trying to "judaize the gospels."

Heschel continues on the agenda of Jewish studies:⁸¹

"Thus, Jewish studies emerged not as a politically neutral field concerned with describing the history of the Jews but as a politically charged effort to reconceive Christian history as well."

Heschel makes more statements that may shed even more light upon her ulterior agenda and that of her Jewish studies colleagues:⁸²

"Telling the story of Christian origins from a Jewish perspective was an act of Jewish empowerment."

Once again, here we have another Heschel admission that certain Jews were driven by an ulterior political agenda: they wanted to gain power over Christianity and thereby fashion Christian history to make it more subservient to a Jewish agenda.

Finally, Heschel may have revealed her ulterior motives when she wrote:⁸³

“Seen in this light, the modern Jewish retelling of Christian origins is not really a matter of Jews attempting to ‘set the record straight.’ Rather, it demonstrates a Jewish desire to enter the Christian myth, become its hero, and claim the power inherent to it.”

Continuing in this vein, consider what she has written about the motives and agenda of the Jewish theological historian Abraham Geiger:⁸⁴

“Telling the story of the life of Jesus became Geiger’s appropriation of the Jesus myth. Through his retelling, Geiger the Jew became the hero, claiming the power that inheres in the story for himself and his community.”

So there you have it. By telling the story of Jesus and Christian origins from a Jewish perspective, Jews gain power over Christianity by “judaizing the gospels,” and this in turn, serves to empower the Jewish community. Now perhaps we can better understand any underlying motives Heschel may have. A distorted and inaccurate view of Christian origins like the one Dr. Heschel promotes enables her to enter into the Christian story, and harness the power of the story for the best interests of her Jewish community and the Zionist movement. Her skewed views would suggest to Christians that they are bound to and forever beholden to the Judaic religion and Jewish interests.

The “Aryan Jesus”

As Heschel points out, the theory that Jesus Christ was not Jewish, but rather an Aryan, had its beginnings in nineteenth-century historical, theological and racialist writings.⁸⁵ Here is the “Aryan Jesus” argument in brief. The New Testament region of Galilee remained outside the Jewish sphere until Aristobulus I, a Jewish king, conquered it c. 103 BCE, forcibly converting its inhabitants to the Judaism. Before the birth of Jesus then, the Galilee was populated by Gentiles. Those inhabitants who were forcibly converted to Judaism were Jewish by religion only, not by ethnicity. The end result was a Galilee of mixed ethnicity. Some then speculated that because Jesus was a Galilean, he was not truly of Jewish ethnicity. One of the central arguments of the Institute was that Jesus was a descendent of the purportedly Aryan population of Galilee.⁸⁶

In a well documented and skillfully argued study of ancient Galilee, New Testament scholar Mark A. Chancey concluded that it is a myth that Galilee in the time of Jesus Christ was populated by mostly Gentiles. There may have been a small minority of Gentiles, but the vast majority of its

inhabitants were of Jewish descent.⁸⁷ Thus, even if Jesus was born and raised in Galilee, it is unlikely that he was an Aryan as the members of the Institute claimed. (A thorough, critical evaluation of this viewpoint is beyond the scope of this essay.)

Heschel insists that the German Christians who promoted the Aryan Jesus concept were fashioning a view of Jesus Christ that served their agenda: they wanted a God who had their own ethnic identity and “fit in” with their racialist ideology.⁸⁸ Yet, this twisting and fashioning of the historical evidence in order to make it conform to a National Socialist agenda is really a mirror image of Heschel’s twisting and fashioning the evidence to make the Christian religion conform to her own Zionist agenda. She admits that Jews of centuries past “constructed” Jesus Christ in “their own image.”⁸⁹ Heschel is heir to this tradition.

Nevertheless, as Biblical scholar Chancey points out, the Gospel writer of Matthew (1: 3-16) lists Gentile women in Jesus’s genealogy, and suggests that this may have been mentioned to show that Gentiles will eventually be included in God’s salvation plan.⁹⁰ In fact, one Catholic Biblical authority identifies four of the women in the genealogy as Gentiles: including women in a genealogy was contrary to Semitic custom.⁹¹ Although there is a huge controversy that surrounds all aspects of the New Testament’s genealogies of Jesus, with some claiming they are fabrications, there are other Biblical scholars who believe that Matthew’s genealogy is of Christ’s mother, Mary.⁹² If Jesus really did have Gentile women in his ancestry, then Heschel’s view is weakened: Jesus was not “totally Jewish.” Either Professor Heschel is unaware of this fact or she is aware of it and chose not to mention it. I now ask her this question: If Jesus Christ was not “purely Jewish,” but of mixed Jewish-Gentile ancestry, what are the theological implications?

The Issue of Paul’s Jewish Ethnicity and National Socialism

Some German nationalists and National Socialists charged that Paul, a former Pharisee of Jewish descent and the second most important figure in Christianity, falsified the Christian message with Jewish beliefs. The 19th century philologist Paul de Lagarde alleged that while Jesus was not Jewish, Paul had falsified the Christian message by “judaizing it.”⁹³ The members of the Institute held similar beliefs: Paul, as a Jew, had falsified Jesus’s message.⁹⁴ Supposedly, Hitler himself believed that Jesus’s message was falsified and exploited by Paul.⁹⁵ When in November 1933, a German Christian leader denounced Paul as a “Jewish theologian” in a speech in which he preached other anti-Jewish claims, he received a thunderous applause from 20,000 attendees at a Berlin rally.⁹⁶ In 1936, a National Social-

ist pastor charged that Paul transformed Christianity into a Jewish religion.⁹⁷ Nevertheless, Heschel notes that Institute director Walter Grundmann at one point in his career put forth the directly opposite view of Paul: he was “the sharpest fighter against judaizing tendencies within Christianity.”⁹⁸ Wherein lies the truth?

In the Christian view, Paul was simply a messenger from God, and the only thing that really counts in the end is the message that Paul sent his listeners. What should be pointed out to both Heschel and the anti-Pauline critics is that Paul put forth an ambivalent and paradoxical view of the Jewish people. His stance can be summed up by his statement in Romans 11: 28:

“In respect to the Gospel, the Jews are enemies of God for your sake; in respect to the election, they are beloved by him because of the patriarchs.”

For those National Socialists who charged that Paul was a “judaizer of Christianity,” I would quote this passage from Thessalonians 2: 14-16:

“Brothers, you have been made like the churches of God in Judea which are in Christ Jesus. You suffered the same fate from your own countrymen as they did from the Jews, who killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets and persecuted us. Displeasing to God and hostile to mankind, they try to keep us from preaching salvation to the Gentiles. All this time they have been ‘filling up their quota of sins,’ but the wrath has descended upon them at last.”

Only by a twisted and contorted interpretation could one conclude that this is the declaration of a “judaizer” of the Gospels. The Catholic editors of The New American Bible point out that here Paul is condemning “the active Jewish opposition to the Gospel, branding it as sin and worthy of divine punishment.”

Paul wrote in Titus 1: 13-14:

“Admonish them sharply, in an attempt to keep them closely to sound faith, and unaffected by Jewish myths or rules invented by men who have swerved from the truth.”

According to the Catholic editors of the *New American Bible*, in this passage Paul was expressing opposition to the forcing of Mosaic Law upon Gentile converts to Christianity. This is consistent with the view that Paul was an opponent of attempts to enforce Jewish customs upon the growing Christian movement.

Finally, historian of the ancient world Michael Grant put forth other reasons why Paul’s doctrines conflicted with the traditional Jewish reli-

gion. The proper basis for membership in "Israel," Paul insisted, had never been observance of Jewish Law or descent from the Jewish patriarchs, but faith. Another source of friction was Paul's deliberate campaign of Gentile conversion, which seemed to violate the doctrine of the Chosen People, the Jewish elect.⁹⁹ Clearly, many in the German Christian movement were mistaken on the issue of Paul and his alleged attempt to "judaize" the Christian religion. In this writer's opinion, Heschel never adequately noted this.

The Fear of Miscegenation in Judaism, Zionism and National Socialism

The German Christian movement held that miscegenation is a sin against God's will.¹⁰⁰ Heschel condemned German Nationalists as "racists" and "anti-Semites" because of their "fear of miscegenation," for she wrote:¹⁰¹

"Legal cases in German courts, brought in the wake of the Nuremberg Laws' criminalization of sexual relations and marriage between Jews and Aryans, and widely reported in the German press, implicated Jews as sexual predators of Aryans, further encouraging Christian theologians to insist on protecting Christian purity by eradicating Jewishness with even more measures. The penetration of Christian bodies by Jewish sex reiterated a typical motif of racist rhetoric, the dangers of miscegenation, and reinforced fears that Aryanism was not immutable, but subject to destruction by Jews. Anti-Semites had long insisted that German Aryan women were vulnerable to Jewish predation [...]."

Here, Heschel has applied her hypocritical racial double standard, for she is on record as opposing intermarriage between Jews and non-Jews. In a 2004 essay on how to "pass down Jewishness," she wrote:¹⁰²

"Simply to teach that human beings are made in the image of God is not a solution to the rising rates of intermarriage and assimilation [between Jews and non-Jews]. I don't think there are any easy answers."

So, according to Heschel's "morality," it is "right" that Jews oppose miscegenation and assimilation between Jews and non-Jews. Yet, Germans who opposed miscegenation between Germans and Jews are "anti-Semites" who engaged in "racist rhetoric."

Heschel fails to note that the Jewish religion, Zionist movement and Israeli state that she so passionately identifies with are also deeply imbued with deep fears of the danger of miscegenation between Jews and non-Jews. In this sense, Judaism, Zionism and German National Socialism are mirror images of each other.

In Jewish Scripture, Ezra 9: 1-10, 14-15; 10: 10-11 and Nehemiah 9: 1-5; 10: 31: 13: 3, 23-31 mixed marriages were denounced, and the Hebrews

were commanded to give up their non-Hebrew wives. According to the Catholic editors of the *New American Bible*, this was done to preserve the unique racial/cultural identity of the Hebrews. Consider these passages: “shall we again violate your [God’s] commandments by intermarrying with these abominable peoples [Canaanites, Hittites, Moabites, Egyptians, etc.]” In Ezra 10: 2-4 we read:

“Then Shecaniah [...] made this appeal to Ezra: ‘We indeed have betrayed our God by taking as wives foreign women of the peoples of the land. Yet, even now there remains a hope for Israel. Let us therefore enter into a covenant before our God to dismiss all our foreign wives and the children born of them, in keeping with what you, my lord, and those who fear the commandments of our God.’”

If the criterion of distinction was religious, God would have commanded the Jews to give up only spouses and children who did not convert to the Hebrew religion. That He commanded them to give up loved ones who were non-Hebrew by ethnic origin—irrespective of whether or not they converted—shows that the dividing line was in fact racial or ethnic.

If Heschel was fair and honest, she would have noted that the fear of miscegenation is an integral part of both German National Socialism and the entities that she so passionately identifies with—Zionism and the society of Israel. For reasons unknown, Heschel failed to report that during the 1930s, The Zionist Federation of Germany displayed the same resistance to miscegenation that was displayed by National Socialism. These German Jews of the Zionist persuasion declared:¹⁰³

“[B]ecause we, too, are against mixed marriage and for maintaining the purity of the Jewish group and reject any trespasses of the cultural domain, we—having been brought up in the German language and German culture—can show an interest in the works and values of German culture with admiration and sympathy.”

Vladimir Jabotinsky (1880-1940), the founder of the Zionist-Revisionist movement that became the ideological foundation of Israeli Likud Party, also condemned miscegenation. Consider this most revealing statement:¹⁰⁴

“An increase in the number of mixed marriages is the only sure and infallible means for the destruction of nationality as such. All the nations that have disappeared in the world (apart from those, of course, who were completely massacred or who disappeared as a result of abnormal conditions of existence) were swallowed up in the chasm of mixed marriages.”

This fear of miscegenation between Jews and non-Jews carries on to this day with the present Israeli government. In mid 2009, the Prime Minister's Office and the Jewish Agency launched an aggressive advertising campaign, the goal of which is to prevent Jews from marrying non-Jews.¹⁰⁵ In September 2009, the Guardian (Great Britain) reported that Israel has state sanctioned "anti-miscegenation programs," in order to prevent Jews from marrying or dating non-Jews, especially Arabs.¹⁰⁶

The reader might ask: how can Heschel criticize National Socialist opposition to miscegenation, while she herself opposes it, and identifies with a religion (Judaism), ideology (Zionism), and state (Israel) that openly condemn miscegenation? We pose this question to Susannah Heschel: why was it "wrong and evil" for National Socialists to be opposed to miscegenation, and yet, "right and good" that Jews be opposed to miscegenation?

Christianity and Ethnic/Racial Nationalism

Heschel leaves the reader with the impression that she condemns Christian ethnic/racial nationalism, for she wrote:¹⁰⁷

"Racism's argument that distinct and immutable orders exist in society lent support to a 'theology of creation.' One Institute member, William Stapel, attempted to demonstrate that racism supported Christian claims to divine creation: just as God had created societal orders—marriage, family, Volk, profession, hierarchy, property, and so forth—God had given each Volk a task and place on earth. Believers in racial hierarchy could see it as an extension of the biblical account of God's creation of hierarchical orders within nature, and social orders such as marriage, and Christians were told that racial orders were an extension of the divine order."

Contrary to what Heschel insinuates, Stapel's claim is somewhat accurate. A passage in Paul's speech to the Athenians is consistent with the view that the Supreme Being did give each different ethnic/racial/cultural grouping a different task and place on earth. In Acts 17: 26, it is written:

"From one stock he [God] made every nation of mankind to dwell on the face of the earth. It is he who set limits to their epochs and fixed the boundaries of their regions."

According to this Biblical passage, God did not integrate the peoples of the earth, but rather established boundaries between them and set limits to their historical eras. The passage also states that God created "nations." In other words, despite the fact that all men came from one stock, the Supreme Being separated humanity into groups which are different from one another in a social, political and racial sense.

In addition, Heschel may have not noticed that the message of the Hebrew legend of the Tower of Babel is similar to the National Socialist view that each *Volk* was given a different task and place on earth. In Genesis 11: 1-9, the Supreme Being separates mankind into different groups and endows them with different languages—each is thereby given a different task and place on earth.

Mysticism and Racial Nationalism: Another Similarity between Zionism and National Socialism

Heschel points out that the German Christians mixed religious mysticism with their ethnic nationalism, as she notes:¹⁰⁸

“Aryan, ’ for them, meant not simply a physical or biological type, but much more an inner spirit that was simultaneously of great power [...].”

Further on in the same book she again expounds on this theme:¹⁰⁹

“Yet, race, according to the völkisch Christians [German Christians], was manifest not only in body, but, just as importantly, in the soul. Character, personality, culture, and spirituality were all products of a racially impregnated soul [...].”

Heschel fails to note that this National Socialist view is similar to the Zionist view expressed by her father. The elder Heschel believed that each different ethnic or racial group’s development was the product of their unique group soul or spirit, for he wrote:¹¹⁰

“Every people has a right to its own territory, in which it can develop its own culture and strive for making a contribution to the world out of its own spirit.”

Later on in the same book he again mixes his religious mysticism with his Jewish nationalism:¹¹¹

“What brought the State of Israel into being? A stream of dreaming, the sacred river flowing in the Jewish souls of all ages. No heresy could stem it, no apostasy could defile it. The State of Israel having been born out of our soul is itself a state of our soul, a reality within us.”

Keep in mind that Susannah Heschel wrote an approving Introduction to the book in which her father made these statements.

Again, note the similarity between Rabbi Heschel’s religious/mystical vision of his Jewish people, Israel and the Jewish “ethnic/racial soul,” and the German National Socialist religious/mystical vision of their German people and the German “racial/ethnic soul.” I ask Susannah Heschel this question: why was it wrong for National Socialists to have mixed mysti-

cism with their German nationalism; yet, it was “morally correct” for her father to have mixed mysticism with his Jewish nationalism?

Walter Grundmann’s Important Insights

One of the great “villains” in Heschel’s writings is the National Socialist theologian and Institute Director, Walter Grundmann. One reason that Heschel condemns Grundmann is because:¹¹²

“Anti-Semitism remained constant within Grundmann’s writings, fed in part by denunciations of Bolsheviks as Jews, at least prior to the 1939 Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact [...].”

National Socialist claims that deeply offend Heschel’s Jewish sensibilities are simply labeled “anti-Semitic,” and this is supposed to function as a “logical disproof” of the claim! Heschel totally ignores the fact that on this issue Grundmann was correct: Jews did play a decisive role in the establishment and functioning of Bolshevism.

Winston Churchill discussed this in his famous 1920 article:¹¹³

“There is no need to exaggerate the part played in the creation of Bolshevism and in the actual bringing about of the Russian Revolution by these international and for the most part atheistical Jews. It is certainly a very great one; it probably outweighs all others. With the notable exception of Lenin, the majority of the leading figures are Jews [Lenin was part Jewish.—Ed.]. Moreover, the principal inspiration and driving power comes from the Jewish leaders. Thus, Tchitcherin, a pure Russian, is eclipsed by his nominal subordinate Litvinoff, and the influence of Russians like Bukharin or Lunacharski cannot be compared with the power of Trotsky, or of Zinovieff, the Dictator of the Red Citadel (Petrograd), or of Krasin or Radek—all Jews. In the Soviet institutions the predominance of Jews is even more astonishing. And the prominent, if not indeed the principal, part in the system of terrorism applied by the Extraordinary Commissions for Combating Counter-Revolution has been taken by Jews, and in some notable cases by Jewesses. The same evil prominence was obtained by Jews in the brief period of terror during which Bela Kun ruled in Hungary. The same phenomenon has been presented in Germany (especially in Bavaria), so far as this madness has been allowed to prey upon the temporary prostration of the German people. Although in all these countries there are many non-Jews every whit as bad as the worst of the Jewish revolutionaries, the part played by the latter in proportion to their numbers is astonishing.”

Recent scholarship has supported Grundmann’s viewpoint. In his 1993 academic study, historian Benjamin Harshav observed:¹¹⁴

“Jews were prominent in the ranks of the early Soviet governments, and the antisemitic expression ‘Judeo-Bolshevism’ is not without foundation.”

The Jewish historian Yuri Slezkine has fully documented the decisive role that Jews played in the establishment and functioning of Soviet Communism in his 2004 work, *The Jewish Century*: Jews formed the “backbone of the new Soviet bureaucracy.”¹¹⁵ Russian Jewish investigative journalist Arkady Vaksberg pointed out that Jews were in charge of eleven of the twelve major camp complexes of the GULAG archipelago, the Soviet Communist slave labor system that brought horror, death and suffering to millions of people.¹¹⁶

I now pose this perplexing question to Susannah Heschel. Did Walter Grundmann engage in “Anti-Semitism” because he accurately pointed out the decisive Jewish influence in Soviet Communism?

Concerning Grundmann’s view of the Jewish people’s historic relationship with Jesus Christ, Heschel writes:¹¹⁷

“Grundmann argued that Jews were the mortal enemies of Jesus and all who followed him.”

There is objective truth to this belief, and one does not even have to quote the Christian Scriptures to show that this so. We have already pointed out how the Talmud brags that it was a rabbinical court which put Jesus to death, in addition to his degrading depiction in these sacred Jewish texts. Some of the most debasing things ever written about Christ are in the Talmud.

Circa 180 AD, Jewish sources compiled a historically influential, direct attack upon Jesus Christ, further supporting the view of Grundmann that many Jews throughout the centuries were his mortal enemy. We let a historian of the ancient Mediterranean world, Michael Grant, pick up the story here:¹¹⁸

“The gulf between the two faiths [Judaism and Christianity] had been steadily and rapidly widening over the years, but now in the later second century AD, when the Gospels were becoming more and more widely known, their strongly anti-Jewish tone helped to cause even the most tenuous final bridges to disappear [...]. And it may well have been at this date, or just a little later, that the Jews first compiled the book which emerged subsequently as the Toledoth Yeshu. That work, at considerable length and in abundant detail, described Jesus as a sorcerer, the son of uncleanness. (He was also said to be a bastard, the son of a soldier called Panthera or Ben Pandera, or Ben Stada.) The Toledoth

Yeshu enjoyed an enormous circulation throughout the ages, and its perusal, combined with a reading of the Gospels, explains clearly enough why the split between Judaism and Christianity was now irrevocable."

The late Israeli scholar, Israel Shahak, in his classic study, *Jewish History, Jewish Religion: The Weight of Three Thousand Years*, revealed the hate for Jesus and Christianity that is so deeply imbued in Judaism. He points out that although Christian persecution of Jews aggravated anti-Christian feelings, these hateful attitudes exist independently of any Christian wrongdoing against Jews. They are shared by Jews who were never persecuted by Christians or who were even helped by them, and were present even when the Christian religion was itself weak and persecuted by Jews. "The very name 'Jesus' was for Jews a symbol of all that is abominable," this maverick Jewish scholar pointed out, "and this popular tradition still persists. The Gospels are equally detested, and they are not allowed to be quoted (let alone taught) even in modern Israeli Jewish schools."¹¹⁹

There is more than a kernel of truth to Walter Grundmann's view: many Jews were, and still are, the mortal enemies of Jesus Christ and Christianity. To my knowledge, Heschel never said that this is false. Expressing a widespread sentiment that has been held by many Jews down through the ages, a prophet and intellectual forefather of Zionism, Moses Hess, held that Christianity is "poison" for Jews.¹²⁰ I wonder if a dedicated Zionist like Susannah Heschel shares this opinion.

Was There Any Truth to the German Christian View of Jesus and Christianity?

Heschel says that "the Institute for the Study and Eradication of Jewish Influence on German Church Life redefined Christianity as a Germanic religion whose founder, Jesus, was no Jew but rather had fought valiantly to destroy Judaism, falling victim to that struggle."¹²¹ She clearly believes that this is all "Nazi lies."

The Institute's belief that Jesus "fought to destroy Judaism" is an overstatement. Nonetheless, there is historical evidence that Jesus Christ was a militant opponent of the ancient Jewish religious authorities. The four Gospels unanimously insist that he was a severe critic of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Historian Michael Grant argues that, though their details vary, the four Gospels are also unanimous that Christ forcibly drove out the money changers and traders who thronged the Jerusalem Temple precincts: the surprising character of these reports suggest that they reflect an authentic historical event. If this is so, not only was Jesus violating Rome's public order, he was also attacking the Jewish priestly aristocracy, which con-

trolled Temple affairs and derived profits from the money-changers tables he drove out.¹²²

Previously we noted that the genealogy of Jesus in Matthew claims that he was of mixed Jewish-Gentile ancestry. If this is accepted, and because we have good reason to believe Jesus really did militantly oppose the Jewish priestly aristocracy, then the belief of the Institute is to a limited extent accurate. Jesus was not “purely Jewish,” and he did fight against the Jewish religious authorities, whose ideas and customs formed the basis of the Jewish religion.

Conclusion

In regard to the course of history, theology really matters. And I would be quick to add, if the theology is in the wrong, the consequences can be ruinous. Although Susannah Heschel’s research is of value because of the theological and historical material from National Socialist Germany that she has made public, it must be viewed with a healthy skepticism. Her Jewish-Zionist value system and outlook act as distorting influences upon all of her writings. As Revisionists, it is our duty to confront her distortions and correct them. Indeed, if Heschel’s distortions and hypocritical double standards are allowed to go unanswered, they will continue to mislead many Christian people, with possibly disastrous historical consequences.

One only has to look at the problems in the Middle East to see the disaster that a partisan theology can help bring about. One of the main reasons that Israel gets unqualified support for their dispossession and oppression of the Palestinians (many of whom are Christian) is because there are a large number of Christians in the United States and Europe who accept the ideology of Christian Zionism. According to this fallacious line of thought, the Bible demands that Christians fan the smoldering fuse of World War III by supporting Israel’s depredations on its neighbors and minorities.¹²³

Apparently, there are also another large number of Christians and non-Christians who accept the skewed theological beliefs of Susannah Heschel, as evidenced by the favorable—and utterly uncritical—reviews that her most recent book, *The Aryan Jesus*, received. One comes away from some of these naïve reviews wondering how such apparently intelligent and learned scholars could be so unthinking and spineless.¹²⁴

Heschel’s deceptive claims and hypocritical racial double standards go unchallenged, at least in part, because in the contemporary world the Jewish-Zionist power elite wields enormous power, and they can brand any intellectual who deviates from their line with the dreaded “neo-Nazi” and

“anti-Semite” labels. In regard to the “Holocaust” and other issues that involve National Socialism, the Jewish-Zionist power elite has enforced ideological conformity throughout much of the Western world. For the best interests of Christian nations and world peace, it is our duty, as Revisionists, to break down this Iron Curtain over the Western world.

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Notes

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- ¹²³ Dewey M. Beagle, *Prophecy and Prediction*. Ann Arbor, Michigan: Pryor Pettengill, 1978; Grace Halsell, *Prophecy and Politics: The Secret Alliance between Israel and the U.S. Christian Right*. Lawrence Hill, 1986; Regina S. Sharif, *Non-Jewish Zionism: Its Roots in Western History*. Zed Press, 1983; Stephen Sizer, *Christian Zionism: Road-Map to Armageddon?* Inter-Varsity Press, 2004.
- ¹²⁴ For example, see Daniel J. Harrington, "Suppressing All Jewishness," *America Magazine*, 16 February 2009. Online: http://www.americamagazine.org/content/article.cfm?article_id=11420

Katyn: Unanswered Questions

Joseph Bishop

The air crash earlier this year in Russia in which the Polish premier and many senior members of his government perished briefly brought the Soviet massacre of Polish officers at Katyn back into public consciousness. They had been journeying there to commemorate the tragic events in 1940 in which 15,000 Polish officers were murdered by the Soviet NKVD. The events in the Katyn forest area in 1940 are today generally known by those amongst the reading public with an interest in history and/or World War Two. There is no longer much controversy over what occurred and thus there is no need to detail the events beyond a relatively brief summary as follows.

Following the 1939 Russian invasion of Poland, the Soviet Union captured some 200,000 Polish prisoners of war. From that number, the Polish officers, numbering approximately 15,000, were separated from the enlisted men and moved to several separate camps in the Soviet Ukraine. In the spring of 1940 they were transported to the Katyn forest area of Russia where they were bound and executed by NKVD units. Surviving family members and Polish officials strongly suspected Soviet foul play and for several years attempted in vain to receive from the Soviet Union an official rendering of the fate of their officers. With the onset of the Russo-German war in 1941, the Polish government in exile became an ally of the USSR and the surviving Polish prisoners were released to form a Polish military under Soviet command. Polish attempts to locate the missing officers intensified but without result.

In 1943 the German government announced to the world their discovery of mass graves in Katyn forest where many Polish officers were found. Representatives from the “General Government” of Poland were allowed to visit the gravesites and to examine exhumed corpses, and subsequently requested the International Red Cross to undertake an investigation. However, without Russian permission the ICRC refused to do so. In consequence, Germany invited forensic medical specialists from twelve European countries – including neutral Switzerland – to form an International Medical Commission tasked to undertake exhumations and to study the date and manner of death. This medical commission concluded that the deaths were by execution and that they occurred in early 1940, *i.e.* while the officers were in Soviet hands. Many other international visitors were



Exhumation of mass grave of Polish officers killed by NKVD in Katyn Forest in 1940. Germans showing their findings to an international commission made up of specialists from several European countries. Published 1943 as picture 23 ("23. Einer Kommission kriegsgefangener britischer Offiziere werden die Ergebnisse der Obduktion zugänglich gemacht") on page 296 of: Amtliches Material zum Massenmord von KATYN; im Auftrage des Auswärtigen Amtes auf Grund urkundlichen Beweismaterials zusammengestellt, bearbeitet und herausgegeben von der Deutschen Informationsstelle, Zentralverlag der NSDAP. Franz Eher Nachf. GmbH., Berlin 1943. Source: Wikicommons. Photo is in the Public Domain.

allowed to visit Katyn and were given a free hand in their own observations and investigations, including some American POWs. As with the commission members, all these visitors were allowed to move about freely and without hindrance or escort.

The Soviet Union responded to the news by blaming the Germans for the crime, and broke off relations with the Polish government in exile, accusing it of propaganda complicity with the Germans. The USSR steadfastly maintained this "the Germans did it" line—also parroted by communists and others obedient to the Russian party line—for some fifty years until Soviet premier Mikhail Gorbachev confirmed in 1990 that the USSR had, indeed, committed the crime.

Such is what is generally known of Katyn. However, other interesting aspects and details surrounding Katyn which are lesser known are useful to consider.

Firstly, those with little understanding of the nature of Marxism-Leninism remain puzzled today as to the purpose of the executions. The communist belief is that the “intelligentsia” of all nations represent a threat—real or theoretical, present or future—to the “dictatorship of the proletariat”, *i.e.* the nomenclature referencing the Soviet ruling elite, and must be “liquidated” en masse. In other words, an entire class of people who represent the most intelligent, able, creative, and active members of society are to be physically exterminated. Such genocide has occurred everywhere the Soviets have taken over, and Poland was not to be an exception.

One might think that times and mores have changed since 1940. A documentary film on Katyn was shown in Poland in the 1980s and some Poles had expressed anger over what had happened. Russian journalist Vladimir Abarinov did some groundbreaking research on Katyn in the 1980s and received a letter from an apologist of the NKVD who justified the massacres with:¹

“Is it really possible that our Polish friends cannot assess what happened from a clear-cut class standpoint? After all, these people were the top echelons of the old Polish army that was in the service of the bourgeoisie. Why then, are the Polish comrades beginning to lose their class intuition and slip into nationalist arrogance?”

In other words, it was OK, even necessary, to wipe out the cream of Poland’s leadership; such was the communist view then, and such it remains today.

Aside from the continued Soviet lies about Katyn, the convoluted politics of the western allies have involved a great deal of misinformation to their own peoples and to the world. These governments understood who the perpetrators were, but this was politically inconvenient to publicly acknowledge. During wartime, the USA and Britain wished to maintain Russian involvement in the war against Germany and were sensitive to the embarrassment and divisiveness which Katyn represented. They also hoped that by appeasing Stalin over Katyn—*i.e.* if they would continue to lie to the world—it might pre-empt his forming a Polish communist government on Soviet soil. So they maintained the fiction that Katyn was probably the act of the Germans or at the very least that they “did not know” the real perpetrators. Poland was pressured by the western allies to go along, to exercise “proper discipline,” and a concerted voice casting suspicion on

Germany was presented to the world. Thus the world's peoples were lied to and were led to believe that Katyn was probably a German crime or that we would never know the facts of it. As for a Polish communist satellite government, Stalin went ahead with that anyway.

In point of fact, with the 1943 revelations, the only nation telling the truth about Katyn was Germany. For Germany it served the purpose of helping to reveal to the world the nature of Soviet communism, as well as—it was hoped—to drive a wedge between the USSR and Poland and the western allies.

The location of the prisoners prior to their execution is also of interest. The three main camps housing the 15,000 Polish officers were former Christian church compounds. Kozielsk was a former Orthodox monastery, Starobielsk was also a former monastery and Orthodox church, and Ostashkov too was located on former Christian Orthodox monastery grounds. Perhaps the Soviet NKVD made such selections for the prisoners because of the allegedly high component of Jews serving in its uppermost ranks, venting a hatred towards Christianity and the former Tsarist system. Or perhaps it was all coincidental. According to Abarinov, the NKVD had a "partiality" for using church buildings this way, in his view as a political act of desecration of Russia's sacred places.² However, there is no known information of the NKVD using former synagogues or mosques as places of imprisonment, torture, and execution.

A "large number of applications" by Jews³ within the ranks of the Polish officers made formal request to the NKVD authorities for special treatment, praising the Soviet Union and asking to be separated from the Poles and admitted as citizens of the USSR. How many were thus saved and admitted is not known. This is noteworthy in view of the well-known solidarity of the officers whilst in captivity.

In the early postwar period, the International Military Tribunal was persuaded by the USSR to bring up Katyn as a war crime and it attempted to assign blame for it on the Germans. The Soviet perspective on trials was eminently political. In their view, defendants are already guilty because the police apparatus had decided it is so, therefore trials are mere formalities. Western jurists at Nuremberg were not much different in this respect of course, but still attempted from time to time to at least put on a show of objectivity and to listen to defendants' testimony and evidence. But in the case of Katyn the evidence was too flimsy and the defense testimony too telling.

German defense counsels were allowed to mount a defense but were prohibited from themselves making accusations against the USSR; *i.e.* they

could not work to disprove the version of the prosecution but could present their own version. They did manage to present sufficient evidence and testimony to clear their clients and the IMT dropped the matter. It was obvious to the tribunal that the Germans had not committed the deed, so who could the perpetrator have been? Rather than pursue that line, the charges were discreetly dropped.

Really, that was quite an accomplishment for defense counsel, since Article 21 of the IMT charter read:

"The Tribunal shall not demand evidence about the commonly known facts and will consider them proved. The Tribunal shall likewise accept without evidence the official government documents and reports of the United Nations, including protocols and documents of the committees created in various allied countries for an investigation of the war crimes, proceedings and sentences of military or other tribunals of each of the United Nations."

That is worth re-reading and pondering closely. It is how many innocent Germans were convicted and executed at Nuremberg.

With the onset of the Cold War, the international political climate had radically changed and it was now in the interest of the western allies to resurrect Katyn and this time to point the finger of blame at the USSR. Angry Soviet denials continued, chimed in with by the new communist government of "liberated" Poland, now a controlled satellite of the USSR. In 1952 a group of American Congressmen chaired by Ray Madden released a statement introducing House Resolutions 390 and 539 resolving Congress to form a committee to investigate Katyn and bring the perpetrators to justice. Resolution 390 was adopted, the committee was formed, and hearings were held.⁴ Of course nothing came of it as it was a mere propaganda exercise. But such an exercise would have been politically impossible a decade earlier. High-profile speeches made by various American and British politicians during the early postwar period were similar exercises, intended to harden attitudes against the Soviet Union albeit without any practical effects.

A 1950 statement⁵ issued by Polish General Anders asked for enquiries and demanded that war criminals be brought to justice. It is noteworthy because of the moral stance taken by Anders in appealing for "all war criminals of this past war" to meet with "adequate punishment." He also expressed his "sincere thanks and appreciation to all those who preferred to put justice and truth before illusory political interests." When reading something like this perhaps one could be forgiven for being appalled at the

hypocrisy of someone like Anders. During the war he instilled in himself “proper discipline” to not accuse the Soviets, expediently putting “justice and truth” well behind the “illusory political interests” of the time.

General Anders was also surely aware of the massacres of ethnic Germans in Poland just prior to the 1939 war as well as the massacres of ethnic Germans there in the months and years after the war’s close. It was illusory political interests that made Poles and the other allies say and do nothing about such crimes, putting justice and truth far behind those interests. In 1940 the German Library of Information in New York published a book⁶ documenting the thousands of dead or missing ethnic Germans who perished in Poland at the hands of Poles in 1939. They estimated some 58,000 dead or missing while later researchers lowered the estimate to at least 5,000. If 5,000 Americans had been murdered anywhere in the world, it would certainly have resulted in a declaration of war. The world has paid very little attention to these crimes. They were not introduced at the Nuremberg IMT trials, no American congressional committee has called for justice, and no speech by Anders or any other prominent Pole has addressed this matter. Regardless of the number of fatalities, no attention at all has been focused here.

This is meant not as a digression, but as a contextual issue related to Katyn. Massacres of ethnic Germans did in large measure lead to the final breakdown of relations between Germany and Poland and to the German and Soviet invasions. This in turn led to the internment of hundreds of thousands of Polish troops by the Soviets and to the massacre of 15,000 of its leadership cadres, *i.e.* the “intelligentsia” of Poland. It would have been tragically ironic if any of these officers had taken part in the pre-war massacres of ethnic Germans. If Germany and Poland had reasonably and peacefully addressed their mutual problems in 1939, the Katyn of 1940 would not have occurred.

One must wonder how to look at all this. These numbers pale in comparison with victims of Allied bombing or with the millions who perished in postwar Europe’s forced population movements or “transfers.” And even those figures pale in comparison with the scores of millions of victims of Stalin’s GULAG or with Mao’s even greater crimes in China. But this is not really a numbers game. It is about the uniqueness of a crime in which the officer elite of an army is deliberately selected out and destroyed. However, even here one must reconsider. Stalin at Yalta had told his western counterparts that he would like to see, or intended that, “50,000 German officers” were to be shot at war’s conclusion. His western allies thought or pretended to think that he was joking. In actuality a figure prob-

ably far higher of German officers were murdered by Stalin's henchmen, as literally millions of German POWs of all ranks in Soviet captivity were never seen again. So what is unique about Katyn? It was a disaster for Poland to be sure, but one receiving attention because the 15,000 served as a political football by all sides both during and after the war.

A final issue is quite intriguing. To what extent did the Soviet secret police and their German counterparts cooperate between 1939 and 1941? Exchanging information, prisoners passed to and fro, etc., in accord with the secret protocols of the 1939 German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact? Abarinov cites prisoner transfers and even relates an interesting high-profile case⁷ in which a German prisoner deported to Germany from the USSR had a suitcase containing his underwear go missing whilst still in Russian hands. Enquiries about this went as high as the Soviet People's Commissar Merkulov—thus indicating a strong spirit of serious cooperation between the two nations. This in turn raises the possibility that information about the Katyn massacres may have been secretly passed to German security officials long before the German invasion of the Soviet Union. There is no evidence for this, it is a speculation only. But supposing it had, the question then raised is why did the Germans only reveal Katyn in the summer of 1943, rather than earlier?

This and many other questions may never be answered about Katyn. The perpetrators themselves are mostly passed away, the documentary evidence is still only gradually surfacing from the former Soviet archives, and much of same has been destroyed and is thus lost forever. The world has mostly forgotten Katyn—although Poland remembers. But it too must remember other, related events from its own history, if justice is ever to prevail.

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Notes

¹ Abarinov. *The Murderers of Katyn*. p. 11

² *Ibid.*, p. 107

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 114-116

⁴ Full text of Congressional statement in Fitzgibbon, *Katyn*. pp. 197-201

⁵ Full text of Anders in *ibid.*, pp. 185-190

⁶ *Polish Acts of Atrocity against the German Minority in Poland*. German Library of Information, New York, 1940

⁷ Abarinov, *op. cit.*, p. 37

REVIEWS

Debating the Holocaust: A New Look at Both Sides*reviewed by Martin Gunnels*

Debating the Holocaust: A New Look at Both Sides, by Thomas Dalton, Theses & Dissertations Press, 280 pages, 2009.

As we all know, Holocaust books tend to be pretty boring. Graphs, charts, numbers, rambling footnotes—when thrown together, page after page, the literature can be exhausting. Whereas most histories are driven by their narratives, by their tales of life, Holocaust scholarship follows a different path. Because reputable Holocaust histories can't really frame a coherent narrative out of such a mysterious and strangely undocumented event, Holocaust historiography constitutes a unique genre within contemporary history. Of course, Holocaust fans can also get their kicks by reading tales like *The Diary of Anne Frank* or Elie Wiesel's latest blockbuster. But as we all know, these texts aren't exactly "history": they tell us very little about what really happened to the Jews in the Reich.

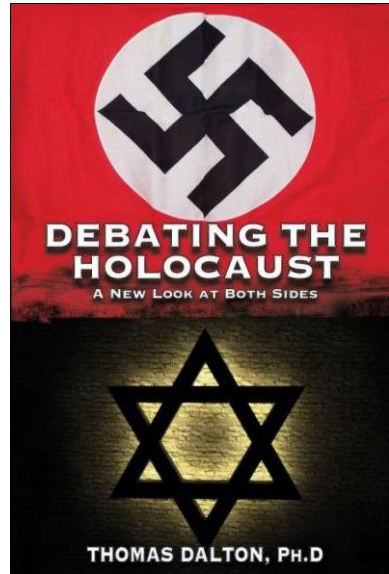
Because orthodox Holocaustiography masquerades as both history and hard science, it has to take itself very seriously. Believing its own myths about unique evil and unprecedented criminality, Holocaust historiography operates in an unironic, funereal atmosphere where alternative possibilities simply don't exist. Yet Holocaust revisionism, on the other hand, does something completely different. It is disputatious, dialogical, and aggressive. Without the traditional Holocaust narrative, it couldn't exist. Dissent is revisionism's *raison d'être*. It is an exercise in intellectual commensalism; it latches onto the gills of mainstream Holocaust scholarship, where it passes basically unnoticed as its gnarly host devours everything in sight.

The key word here, of course, is unnoticed. If the Holocausters paid attention to their little revisionist fellow traveler, the Holocaust, like all other historical events, would then be open to legitimate historical debate. And that's the last thing establishment Holocaust historians want. So we're not fooled when Thomas Dalton swears that he is not a revisionist, that he's merely a neutral observer trying to objectively present a scholarly debate. As far as the true blue Holocausters are concerned, there is no debate. By simply positing that a dialog exists—and by refusing to subtitle his book with some overblown, sensational reference to "assassinated" or "assault-

ed” memory—Dalton is throwing in his lot with the dark side. He is, alas for him, one of us.

Nonetheless, *Debating the Holocaust: A New Look at Both Sides* is a new kind of revisionism. Because he is careful to appear nonpartisan, Dalton doesn’t make any new discoveries or devise any new theories. What he does, however, is synthesize a wide range of mainstream and revisionist scholarship in an attempt to patch together the most important challenges that revisionism has posed to conventional Holocaust opinion. But because his work is a synthesis, he has to do more than recite the strongest work of Graf, Mattogno, Rudolf, and Faurisson (his favorite revisionists); he must also present the cases of Pressac, van Pelt, and Hilberg (his favorite Holocausters). Fortunately, Dalton knows both sides well, and so his text is especially valuable to non-experts who are interested in a straightforward presentation of how mainstream Holocaustography measures up to its revisionist response. Dalton begins by reminding us why the Holocaust is so important to revise. “Why not let the Jews have their ol’ Holocaust?,” he poses to himself rhetorically. After giving the obligatory reply that we have to dedicate ourselves to historical truth, he quickly proceeds to the good stuff. He describes why we can’t just move on and forget about the Holocaust debate:

“We are not allowed to forget about it, even if we wanted to. Coverage of the Holocaust is standard fare in every school curriculum. Children the world over read The Diary of Anne Frank, Number the Stars, Waiting for Anya, Butterfly. Students learn about the gas chambers and the six million, about the Nazi atrocities. We watch Holocaust miniseries on television, Schindler’s List, and Night and Fog. We celebrate ‘Holocaust Education Week,’ and we acknowledge January 27 each year as the ‘International Day of Commemoration’ of Holocaust victims, as declared by the UN in 2005. School children collect six million pencils, or six million paperclips. We visit Holocaust museums. We take college courses (for full credit) from endowed chairs in Holocaust studies. This is not by accident. It is a deliberate plan, to make sure we ‘never for-



get.' And if we can never forget, then we should at least get the story straight."

Dalton gets it. Instead of repeating the orthodox garbage about "never forget" and "never again," he reminds us that, if we're going to canonize a historical event in state and popular culture, and if we're going to let this historical event dominate our foreign-policy rhetoric and guide the actions of our empire, we better keep an open mind about what really happened. By reminding us of the ubiquity of the Holocaust in our lives—and in the lives of the other 6 billion people residing under the jurisdiction of the United Nations—Dalton points out that, despite his earlier claims about needing to set the record straight for mere historical truth, the Holocaust really needs to be revised because of the tyranny it imposes upon the world's publics. Because of the Holocaust campaign, the old protest refrain we hear so often is as true for us as it is for anyone: "We are all Palestinians now." We have all been thoroughly colonized by the Holocaust, and to decolonize, we must first revise. As Dalton himself points out, by indicting one of the central myths of the postwar liberal order, "Revisionists challenge not only orthodoxy; they challenge the power of the State."

After describing what's at stake in the debate, Dalton moves on to the basic complaints of the revisionists: the unreliability of the eye-witnesses, the dubiousness of the six million figure, the strange dematerialization of most of the death camps (along with their millions of victims), the impracticality of the murder weapons, the wartime photos' failure to corroborate the mainstream narrative, the lack of any explicit order from Hitler or the Nazi bureaucracy, and the preponderance of "survivors" who somehow managed to live through the omnipotent, satanic Nazi death machine. After reciting a thorough list of standard revisionist "concessions"—among them the regrettable and atrocious persecution of Europe's Jews, at least hundreds of thousands of whom died—Dalton debunks several "myths" about revisionism. He trashes the clichés that circulate about revisionists: that they are all neo-Nazis, for example, or that they all believe that the Holocaust was some sort of "hoax," the unfortunate vocabulary of which evokes images of tinfoil hats and Luftwaffe exoduses to the moon.

Dalton breaks down the six "death" camps one-by-one, presenting the traditionalist narrative before detailing revisionists' critiques. What we get are not dry, feeble regurgitations of revisionist research; instead we find well-analyzed summaries of the work conducted by contemporary revisionism's strongest researchers. Further, Dalton's information is up-to-date, as he relies much more upon Rudolf, Mattogno, and Graf than he does the groundbreaking work of Arthur Butz. The work's strongest fea-

ture, indeed, is its scope: never before has an author written such an accessible yet comprehensive and critical synthesis of revisionist and traditionalist sources.

That's not to say that the book doesn't make some pretty weird choices. The cover, to my utter confusion, is adorned with a giant star of David and an even more giant swastika, as if those are the two "sides" of the Holocaust debate. Since Dalton spends so much time emphasizing that revisionists are not just Nazis, and that traditionalists aren't just Zionist Jews, this is a most bizarre, dissonant flaw; and because these images are emblazoned on the book's front cover, they're difficult to sweep under the rug. But despite this minor yet conspicuous mistake, I think *Debating the Holocaust* is an important contribution to the current state of revisionist scholarship, and I can only hope that, in future editions (this successful book is already in its third printing), the book's menacing, misleading cover will be replaced by something more befitting its reasonable and inoffensive content.

In closing, I want to address why this book is so important and timely. To put it bluntly, we needed a valuable addition to the revisionist literature. With Germar Rudolf out of commission, book-length revisionism has lost its most energetic contributor. It is heartening to see Theses and Dissertations Press alive and well, and we should commend them for continuing to bring us the kind of vital scholarship that keeps historical revisionism dynamic and alive. Along with the recent appearance of *Inconvenient History*, I'm hopeful that Dalton's new volume signals a reawakening of serious revisionist work. After all, the book is a very potent effort at setting the record straight about revisionist claims, and it's done in such a reasonable, straightforward way that you could give the book to your mom without apology. It is the kind of book that resists drowning its reader in statistics, opting instead for a concise, memorable, camp-by-camp analysis of what Dalton calls "the great debate." In *Debating the Holocaust*, the revisionist community now has the closest thing yet to an encyclopedic handbook of revisionist arguments. This is the work's most remarkable achievement, and I hope it will only mark the very beginning of Thomas Dalton's promising new career in the fight for historical truth.

Holocaust: The Nazi Persecution and Murder of the Jews

reviewed by Thomas Dalton

Holocaust: The Nazi Persecution and Murder of the Jews, by Peter Longerich, Oxford University Press, Oxford, UK; 2010, 645 pp.

If indeed, as USHMM Director Sara Bloomfield recently commented, the Holocaust is still a “relatively new field of academic study”—now 65 years after the fact—then it is presumably appropriate to find new ‘milestone’ works still being produced. Earlier writings were dominated by the likes of Reitlinger, Hilberg, Dawidowicz, Gutman, and Arad. More recently we’ve seen people like Browning and Kershaw rise to the top. But now we have a new standard-bearer, and his name is Peter Longerich. His new book, *Holocaust*, is “now generally recognized by historians as *the* standard account of this horrific chapter in human history”—or so says his prestigious publisher, Oxford University Press. As such, it is worthy of careful analysis and review, by traditionalists and revisionists alike.

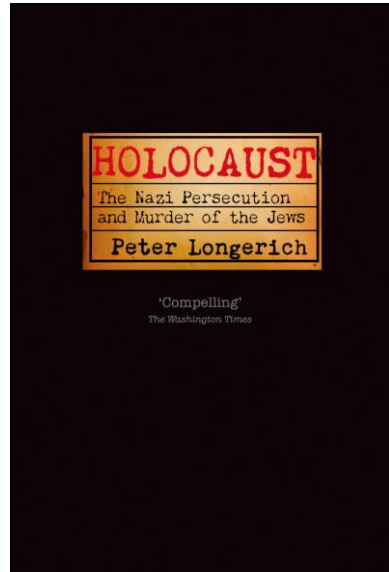
Longerich is no newcomer to the field, having published important works since the late 1980s. He is a German researcher and historian, currently serving as a professor in the German Department at the University of London. He made his mark in 1998 with the release of the book *Die Politik der Vernichtung* (*The Policy of Destruction*). This work received widespread acclaim but its impact was muted by the fact that it was published only in German. Early plans for an English version were delayed, and by the time agreement was reached with Oxford Press, new developments demanded numerous changes. Hence, the present book: a “significantly reworked” version of *Politik*, to the point where we may treat it as a new work.

At 645 pages, *Holocaust* is a substantial effort, but nothing like Hilberg’s massive 1300-page, three-volume epic (cf. his 2003). Still, plenty of space to address all relevant and unsettled aspects of the topic, and (presumably) shed new light on them—or else, why even write such a book? Given that this decade alone has seen the publication of nearly 28,000 books on or about the Holocaust,¹ surely the historians of the world can be expected to publish only truly new material, addressing the many unanswered questions and troubling aspects of this dark era of our past. At least, this was my initial hope upon acquiring the book. Alas, I was disappointed.

But first the basics: The book is unique, the author tells us, in a number of ways. First is its heavy reliance on primary sources—from German archives, of course, but also those of the former Warsaw Pact states, particularly Russia.² Second is Longerich’s focus on the perpetrators, *i.e.* Nazi actions and motivations, with a notable de-emphasis on the victims, witnesses, and survivors—more on this below. Third is his detailed look at the build-up and “decision process” that led to the extermination of the Jews. Longerich has made something of a specialty in the study of the “Hitler order” (or lack thereof) for the Holocaust, and he has some interesting thoughts on this troublesome issue.

This latter point is reflected in the book’s contents, which are weighted heavily to the ‘pre-extermination’ years. The first four (of five) parts of the book cover 1933-1941 in substantial detail; his analysis of the *Einsatzgruppen* shootings is of particular interest. But the ‘meat’ of the Holocaust, which begins only in 1942, is covered in just the final Part V—only slightly more than 100 pages. And so we are misled by his title; it’s not so much the “Holocaust,” but rather like the “Prelude to the Holocaust.” Apparently Longerich felt that the ‘Holocaust proper’ had already achieved sufficient coverage—in those other 27,999 books of recent years.

Be that as it may, we must analyze the content as given. I was immediately impressed, not so much by what was in the book, as what was *not*. The absences here are striking, and telling. First, as mentioned above, is the priority on German documents and other wartime sources, at the expense of the foundation of the traditional view—the witnesses. Survivor statements, as fragile and problematic as they are, serve as the core of the entire edifice. Without their explicit and emphatic testimony, historians are left with a hodge-podge of difficult and ambiguous German documentation. Longerich warns the reader of this up front, and true enough—the witnesses are nowhere to be seen. A scan through the book finds no mention—nothing—of: Wiesel, Frankl, Levi, Rajzman, Wiernik, Vrba, Reder, Tauber, Nyiszli, etc. This is quite striking, but in retrospect, probably good strategy. The holes and contradictions in the testimony are legion.³ Perhaps



this will be the traditionalist strategy of the future: distance oneself from the troublesome survivors, continue to ignore truly difficult issues, and focus on ambiguous documentation and abstract speculation.

The second omission is as unsurprising as it is contemptible. In the present day, in 2010, to publish a major work on the Holocaust with not a single mention of revisionists, or revisionist challenges, is the height of deception and academic dishonesty. To utterly ignore the work of Mattogno, Rudolf, Graf and others—even David Irving has not a single mention—is absolutely inexcusable. We can have no doubt that Longerich is aware of them, as he testified as an ‘expert witness’ in the 2000 Irving trial. And as a German scholar, he was certainly aware of the uproar over the Zündel and Rudolf imprisonments. What kind of expert is it that, in his own lengthy publications, chooses to willfully ignore the evidence and analysis that most deeply challenges his own personal interpretations?

But perhaps I am too hard on Professor Longerich. After all, his own orthodox contemporaries fare not much better. Browning and Gerlach earn the most discussion in the text, with five or six minor citations each. But apart from scattered footnote references and uncited listings in the bibliography, he virtually ignores the likes of Kershaw, Pressac, Piper, Evans, Tregenza, Gutman, and Arad. Van Pelt merits only a single mention in the text (p. 281). Andrzej Kola’s revealing excavation work at Belzec and Sobibor is completely overlooked.⁴ Even the former dean of Holocaust research, Raul Hilberg (God rest his soul), is virtually dismissed. Only seven years after the definitive 2003 edition of his magnum opus, and just three years after his demise, Hilberg earns but three passing mentions in the text. In a final insult (p. 202), Longerich even misspells the poor man’s name (“Raoul”). This dismissal of Hilberg can be read as a kind of implicit admission that Jürgen Graf (2001) was right all along—that this giant does indeed have feet of clay.

A fourth area of neglect is the use of relevant photographs. There is, sadly, not a single photograph in the entire book: no air photos, no ground photos, no corpse photos, no mass grave photos. The uninformed reader may not realize what he is missing, but knowledgeable ones will immediately suspect that important information is being overlooked, and perhaps even deliberately avoided. As we know, air photos of the death camps show neither mass burials nor any signs of mass murder. The many war-time ground photos of, for example, Auschwitz show nothing extraordinary—certainly nothing consistent with what is alleged to have happened there. Traditional historians seem to have figured out that photos cause nothing but trouble, and thus it is best to avoid them altogether, rather than

trying to construct ad hoc explanations for their benign appearance. In this same category of neglect I would include charts, tables, diagrams, or other figures that could help clarify the situation. There is not one such item to be found in the book—just wall-to-wall text. To name one example, I myself have argued for a simple time-based charting technique, showing fatalities over time, that turns out to be very useful in depicting the flow of events.⁵ It's a shame that Longerich didn't adopt something like this. But it's understandable, if clarity is not an objective.

Two final omissions: The six death camps, which together account for around 50% of alleged Jewish deaths, play an absolutely minimal role here. Auschwitz gets its obligatory scattering of references, but the other camps are near invisible. Belzec and Sobibor are mentioned on a dozen pages or so; Treblinka, Majdanek and Chelmno get about half that. At a minimum, one would hope for updated death figures for each of these camps—but such figures are not to be found.⁶ Any details offered on the camps are merely perfunctory, a repetition of standard accounts that one has been reading for years. Even granted that the 'extermination phase' was not the focus of the book, it's hard to understand how any work purporting to be "the standard account" of the Holocaust can spend such little time on those notorious camps.

Finally, what was, to me, the most surprising omission: the 'six million' is nowhere to be found. Not once does Longerich mention this number, so vital to the orthodox account that the powers-that-be are willing to mete out prison sentences and book-burnings for those who dispute it. And it's not that he has an alternative figure; he simply offers none at all. On a couple of occasions I found mention of "millions" of Jewish deaths—but how are we to take this? If it's 'two millions,' then Longerich is in for trouble. Whatever he has in mind, I think revisionists should take heart here: the absence of the sacred touchstone may portend a future backing-down, and thus yet another concession to revisionism.

* * * * *

But let me move on to the substantive remarks in the book. Right from the start we learn that anti-Semitism was the focal point of Nazism:

"What seems to me to be crucial to any analysis [of the Holocaust] is the fact that Judenpolitik was central to the whole National Socialist movement, indeed that the very aims, the distinctiveness, and the uniqueness of National Socialism as a historical phenomenon were determined by its Judenpolitik. [...] Hitler himself had [...] developed a

worldview in which anti-Semitism held a central position: it was the linchpin for all the various ideological clichés [...].” (pp. 5, 15)

This not only demonstrates the Nazi ‘obsession’ with the Jews, but it also points to a favored theme of Longerich’s: that, due to this deeply-ingrained Jewish antipathy, a ‘single decision’ or a ‘single order’ by Hitler to murder the Jews was not necessary.

“[W]e should abandon the notion that it is historically meaningful to try to filter the wealth of available historical material and pick out a single decision that led to the ‘Final Solution’. This approach is pointless not only because the debate on the ‘Final Solution’ has evidently reached the limits of what is provable, but above all because any attempt to identify a decision taken at a single moment in time runs counter to the extreme complexity of the processes that were in fact taking place.” (p. 6)

So we ought not bother to look for a nice, clean ‘Hitler order.’ And the lack of one—or even any indirect reference to one—should not trouble us. The Holocaust was “a highly complicated decision-making process,” and thus we should naturally expect to find gaps in the chain of command. Naturally.

Hence, in spite of “an almost unmanageably large quantity of documents available” to researchers, a definitive account of the decision process is lacking; “the state of source material can only be described as ‘patchy’” (p. 8). The most important orders, he says, were verbal. Vital documents were destroyed. And all remaining documents “relating to the murder of the Jews are written in a language designed to veil their true purpose”—thus the infamous ‘code language’ theory is evidently alive and well, despite a total absence of evidence.

The bulk of Part I—comprising six chapters—is dedicated to recounting the growing persecution of the Jews from 1933 to the outbreak of war in 1939. Longerich marks out three phases of increasing anti-Semitism: March-June 1933, spring to late summer 1935, and the year 1938 (culminating in *Kristallnacht* on November 9/10). He charts the steady progress of the *Entjudung*, or de-Judaization, of German society that began in late 1935; these are well-documented in Goebbels’s diary entries of the time.⁷

Much emphasis is placed on a post-*Kristallnacht* meeting, of 12 November 1938, in which the Nazi leadership works out the process of “getting the Jews to leave Germany”—in the words of Heydrich (p. 115). As is well known, the Germans at this time had no thoughts of mass murder (if they ever did), but only intended to achieve a Reich that was *Judenfrei*, or

Jew-free. Having some 600,000 Jews under their direct control,⁸ they clearly faced a massive problem of population transfer. Longerich quotes Goering regarding the Madagascar project, which was conceived as a possible destination for Jews who were not accepted into other countries. This is the earliest mention of Madagascar in the book, and the reader is left with the impression that it started here. But in fact it had been a topic of discussion months before.⁹

Another deceptive move occurs at the beginning of Chapter 6, wherein Longerich examines the threats of “extermination” of the Jews, which supposedly began in late 1938. For one, he never informs the reader of the ambiguities involved with the German terms *Ausrottung* and *Vernichtung*. The terms themselves, which are translated as ‘extermination’ or ‘annihilation,’ never explicitly appear. In fact the words have a range of meanings that are dependent on the context; often they mean something far less than mass murder. In their most literal sense, they mean simply a ‘rooting-out’ or forced deportation.¹⁰ To suggest otherwise is dishonest.

Second, Longerich implies that the whole concept of Jewish extermination was invented at that time, by the Nazis—citing a 1938 article from the SS journal *Schwarze Korps*. But in fact Jewish fears of “extermination” had existed for decades already. As early as 1905, we read in the *London Times* that “Anti-Semitic disturbances are now in full swing in the Odessa (Russia) district [... A]uthorities have received an Imperial [order] commanding the extermination of all Jews” (7 Nov.). Ten years later the *New York Times* reported that “the Russian Government [has] only one aim in view, to exterminate the Jewish race” (14 April). In 1930 the *NYT* wrote about anti-Semitism in Romania, and the need for “world intervention to thwart extermination of the Jews” (24 Dec.).

By 1933, the ‘exterminators’ were now the Germans. In a revealing progression, the *NYT* first reports on the “economic extermination” of the Jews there (13 March; 6 April). Then on June 29 we read in a headline that “Hitler’s program is one of extermination”—but the text below clarifies that “the aim of the Hitler regime is the extermination of the Jew *in German life*” (emphasis added). (In case we thought he meant *killing*.) By August, the economic context is dropped; we read only of “the avowed object of exterminating them [the Jews]” (7 Aug.), and that “600,000 Jews of Germany are facing certain extermination” (16 Aug.). From then on, it’s murder all the way—to 6 million.

To his credit, Longerich acknowledges that such talk was nonsense. Even through Hitler’s Reichstag speech of 30 January 1939, he tells us, reference to extermination does not mean murder. Rather, such talk indi-

cates only a “tactical intention”: to increase the “pressure of expulsion,” and to coerce the foreign nations, “through a form of blackmail,” to take in the Jews (p. 124). Of course, all this changes by 1941, as we are soon to read.

Part II of the book is brief: three short chapters addressing the T4 ‘euthanasia’ program and the initiation of Jewish deportations in 1939 and 1940. About 1.7 million Polish Jews came under German control in late 1939, which was a huge increase over the (by then) roughly 250,000 Jews in the expanded Reich. This demanded a major reassessment of the Jewish Question. Longerich identifies four progressive phases in this process: (1) initial plans, in September and October 1939, for a *Judenreservat* (Jewish reservation) in Poland; (2) deportations into the General Government, combined with ghettoization and accelerated emigration, in the period November 1939 to March 1940; (3) development of the Madagascar plan (June to October 1940); and (4) deportations to unidentified areas in “the East,” from November 1940 on.

Phase 1 is of some interest, as it centers on the “Nisko project.” This small town, located in south-east Poland about 100 kilometers west of Belzec, was the initial target station for the first wave of deportations. It was to be a *Durchgangslager*, “a kind of filter through which the deportees would be moved to the ‘Jewish reservation’” (p. 152). Upon passing through Nisko, the Jews would either be left stranded in their reservation, or, “[driven] over the demarcation line into the territory then occupied by the Soviet Union, which was common practice in the district of Lublin at the end of 1939” (p. 153). Noting that such a process would result in many deaths, Longerich comments that

“even those who initially survived would not have found adequate living conditions, or conditions for reproduction, and would therefore have been condemned to extinction. The Nisko campaign therefore permits the conclusion that [it] was a first version of a ‘final solution’ policy since its aim was the physical termination of those Jews [...]” (p. 154)

Though this project was short-lived, it did serve as a successful experiment in Jewish deportation—one that would be repeated later, in much great numbers.

Shortly thereafter, construction commenced on the first large Jewish ghettos. These temporary holding pens would suffice until a longer-term deportation plan was developed. Interestingly, Longerich cites a Himmler memo of May 1940, in which the *Reichsführer-SS* entertains an extreme

solution: “the Bolshevik method of the physical extermination of a people”—an option which is immediately rejected as “un-Germanic and impossible” (p. 162).

It was in this context that the Madagascar plan emerged. It became all the more urgent as the estimate of the number of Jews under Nazi and Axis control surged: from 3¼ million (Heydrich; June 24) to 4 million (RSHA; August 15) to 6½ million (!), as cited by Rademacher in late August 1940. Indeed: if there ever was a factual basis for the ‘extermination of 6 million Jews’, it was in the context of the (non-homicidal) Madagascar plan. That round figure was evidently in circulation for several months in late 1940; Longerich additionally cites two notes by Eichmann, of December 3 and 4, referring to ‘six million’ (p. 492, note 154), and “a total of some 5.8 million Jews” (p. 173), respectively. As before, Longerich sees in this the nefarious beginnings of the Final Solution:

“[T]he idea that millions of European Jews would be deported to Madagascar for years and years, and the fact that [...] a large proportion of the transported Jews would presumably die there relatively quickly as victims of the hostile living conditions they would meet,^[11] all this makes it perfectly clear that behind this project lay the intention of bringing about the physical annihilation of the Jews under German rule.” (p. 164)

It’s surprising, to say the least, that Longerich can deem “perfectly clear” the Nazi intention for total annihilation already in late 1940. Particularly so, given his overall thesis of a long, drawn-out, “complicated” decision process for mass murder.

Rapid advances on the eastern front would change things, but the Madagascar plan remained viable well into 1942. Goebbels mentions it in his diary as late as March 7 of that year, as a true final destination (‘final solution’?) of the Jews who were evacuated, provisionally, to the Soviet East. That he would write this, in March 1942, is striking: at that point the mass killing was allegedly well underway.¹²

* * * * *

Longerich dedicates Part III to the *Einsatzgruppen*, those roving militias that allegedly killed between one and 1.5 million Jews in the occupied Soviet territory. As those who have researched this topic know, the entire basis for the claimed shootings is murky. Everything relies upon a series of German reports that are fraught with difficulties, ranging from exaggeration and miscounting to contradiction and outright fraud. Despite the many

books on the subject, no one has yet constructed a clear, basic explanation of the ‘who’ and ‘when’ of these killings.

He spends several pages puzzling over the absence of an extermination order for the Soviet Jews. The Ohlendorf testimony at Nuremberg, long considered to be ‘proof’ of such an order, is rightly dismissed as a contrivance for self-defense. After mulling over “local initiatives” and “framework orders,” Longerich offers up this Hilberg-esque statement:

“What emerges from all this is the impression of a degree of vagueness in the way orders were issued to the Einsatzgruppen. A manner of issuing orders in which the subordinate was supposed to recognize the ‘meaning’ behind the words intuitively is familiar from National Socialist anti-Jewish policy [... T]his practice presupposed a certain collusiveness, a strongly developed feeling of consensus amongst those involved [...].” (p. 189)

As with the larger Holocaust, “no order from the Führer to murder the Jews was ever issued to the *Einsatzgruppen*” (p. 499, note 69); this alleged event “cannot be understood as the implementation of a single order issued by the National Socialist hierarchy” (p. 235). Consequently, *Einsatzgruppen* B and C “displayed some considerable perplexity” about how to handle the ‘final solution’ (p. 210): on the one hand, they were supposed to shoot partisans attacking the German army from the rear, but on the other, there was strong need for forced labor. Alfred Rosenberg described “the establishment of ghettos and labour gangs” as the “key solution” to the Jewish question, and the *Einsatzgruppen* leadership evidently concurred. Ghettoization was to be the first phase of the final solution, to be maintained during the war. Complete removal (“annihilation,” according to Longerich) would come after the war.

On top of this strategic confusion was the number of groups allegedly shooting Jews. In addition to the four primary *Einsatzgruppen* (A, B, C, D), Longerich describes a fifth “special purpose” group, and then two more undefined ones, making seven in total. To these he adds police battalions (p. 203), SS brigades (p. 214), “local voluntary troops” (p. 239)—of whom there were an astounding 300,000 or more!—and the Wehrmacht (p. 242). Bullets were flying everywhere, and Jews, it seems, were the main recipients. (One could almost be excused for thinking that a war was going on[...])

And not just bullets: Longerich continues the story that “gas vans [...] were commissioned for use in the occupied Eastern areas” (p. 240). But he offers neither details, evidence, nor numbers killed.

In the end Longerich offers only a disconnected and incoherent account of the *Einsatzgruppen*. All the documentation on ghettos, forced labor, and Jewish reserves suggest minimal killing, as do reports that the vast majority of Jews fled the incoming Germans and thus were not there to be killed. Not to mention the fact (the author certainly didn't!) that there is far too little evidence of human remains or former mass graves to account for more than a fraction of the alleged 1-1.5 million fatalities.

The *sole* bases for the orthodox claims are the German reports, but these “do not represent precise statistics.” Longerich acknowledges that “some commandos reported exaggerated totals or reported the same figures twice” (p. 254). He is being charitable. Another knowledgeable source, Headland (1992: 94) states, “the irregularity of the reporting frustrates us at every turn”; he goes on to lament “the often contradictory nature of the reports, the obvious self-promotion and self-serving criticisms [...] and their incomplete, inconsistent, and at times, inaccurate quality” (p. 203). Butz (2003: 243-246) argues that many reports were Russian forgeries, to further implicate the hated Germans. There is the additional problem that the report totals often did not include a racial breakdown, so we cannot be sure how many Jews were included. Longerich's final flaw is his emphasis on the year 1941. That year covered only six months of *Einsatzgruppen* operation, and thus only about a third of the alleged murders—a number that “must be” around 500,000.

One would have expected him to give much greater weight to the shootings in 1942—but the 10 pages covering that period, in Chapter 17, are a mish-mash of statistics devoid of coherent conclusions. To mention the most glaring example, Longerich cites, almost in passing (p. 353), the single most stunning *Einsatzgruppen* statistic: the assertion that HSSPF Leader Hans-Adolf Prützmann and his team reportedly killed a mind-boggling 363,211 Jews in just three months (Sept-Nov 1942)—over 4,000 per day.¹³ This, in addition to the on-going *Einsatzgruppen* actions. But we get no analysis or discussion; just the comment that “Hitler took note of it.” All this suggests that Longerich has in fact a very superficial grasp of the realities of the *Einsatzgruppen*.

* * * * *

Even into late 1941, the ad hoc ‘regional’ killing continued. It functioned “in a largely uncoordinated fashion,” because there was as yet “no overall plan for the murder of the European Jews” (p. 283). The growth of these regional exterminations “required a very complicated interaction” between units, “a mélange of orders and objectives on the part of the central au-

thorities, and independent initiatives and intuition on the part of the regional powerholders” (p. 304)—bringing us back to Hilberg’s ‘mind-reading’ again.

Part V, finally, arrives at the full-blown extermination phase. But even here, into 1942, we get qualifications and hesitations. Longerich places a repeated emphasis, not on the systematic mass murder of orthodoxy, but on an alternative hypothesis, that of “extermination through work.” This is a kind of have-your-cake-and-eat-it-too strategy: all the actual evidence points toward confinement, deportations, ghettos, and forced labor... but that’s just work, not murder. So, clearly, they must have been worked to *death*. And those incapable of work were, naturally, killed straightaway.

By our author’s counting, a fourth wave of deportations commenced in May 1942. Previous removals were destined for the ghettos; but now, “the great majority of deportees were shot directly at the end of the journey, or suffocated in gas vans. [...] The murder machinery was completely freed from the context of ‘resettlement,’ ‘expulsion,’ and ‘work programme’ [...]” (p. 323). This is an odd statement, given that the six death camps were allegedly gassing (in chambers) between 60,000 and 100,000 Jews per month at this time, and would soon be well over 250,000 per month.

Chapter 17 continues with a very cursory overview of the camps themselves; even Auschwitz gets less than one page of dedicated text (p. 344). It closes with the on-going lament about how incomprehensible was the ‘mass murder’ order: “The decision-making process underlying the systematic genocide remains largely obscure and must be reconstructed from the course of events” (p. 359). It would be more accurate to say *constructed*, since Longerich himself fills in all necessary gaps with assumptions, inferences, and outright inventions. Critical pieces of evidence in the extermination story are missing and unaddressed: the impossibility of gassing with carbon monoxide, the incoherent account of Zyklon-B chambers, the impossibility of mass open-air incineration with wood, the air photos, the missing bodies, the missing mass graves, and any analysis of Jewish population movement. Even his own account is peppered with incriminating facts, like the continued eastward deportations through late 1943, the expulsion (not murder) of foreign Jews at that same time, and Himmler’s suspension of Jewish deportations from Hungary in August 1944.

“As confusing as the overall picture may seem at first [...]” (p. 428). Confusing indeed. More like an ad hoc construction, using selective pieces of evidence with a predetermined conclusion in mind. And a failure to examine contrary evidence in a critical manner, and to examine alternative

accounts that better explain the evidence. In other words—an entirely unscientific account.

In the end, I can't recommend this book to anyone interested in a better understanding of the Holocaust. This book adds as much confusion as insight. But it is useful in the study of 'Holocaustism'—that growing ideology of persecution and guilt, so useful for propaganda purposes and monetary extortion. The failings of orthodoxy are now in full view, open to all who are willing to see.

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Notes

- ¹ Number based on a survey of books with keyword "Holocaust," according to WorldCat, the most extensive library database available. Not all these are completely new works, of course; this figure includes reissues, new translations, and revised editions. But it is an impressive number nonetheless: something like 230 books per month, or nearly 8 *per day*, since the year 2000. And this is just for physical, hard-copy books. If we include all media (Internet, visual, audio, etc), the number rises to just over 39,000.
- ² Two collections were of particular importance for him: the *Centralverein*, and the SD papers.
- ³ Not to mention the looming catastrophe (for traditionalism) of the Elie Wiesel case. If he—the king of survivors—turns out to be a fraud, then a huge blow will have been struck. At that point, no witness testimony anywhere will be able to stand unchallenged. For the Wiesel story, see www.eliewieseltattoo.com.
- ⁴ Again, fortuitously. Kola's excavations notably failed to find the expected evidence, and thus cause yet additional problems for the orthodox account.
- ⁵ In my terminology, a 'death matrix.' See my book *Debating the Holocaust* (2009).
- ⁶ The one exception is for Belzec, for which Longerich accepts the Höfle figure of 434,598 (p. 340).

- ⁷ For example: “The *Entjudung* in the Reich Chamber of Culture moves forward. I will not be at peace until it is completely free of Jews.” (5 May 1937). For more on the diaries, see my 2010 essay on Page 14 of this volume.
- ⁸ The figure includes about 200,000 Austrian Jews who were incorporated into the Reich upon the *Anschluss* of March 1938.
- ⁹ See, for example, the Goebbels diary for 11 March 1937; my article “Goebbels on the Jews” (Dalton 2010) has an elaboration of this and other diary entries.
- ¹⁰ For a further discussion on the terminological question, see my 2009 book (p. 87).
- ¹¹ For the record, Madagascar is something of a tropical paradise, with fertile soil, abundant fresh water, and diverse mineral resources.
- ¹² Three of the six death camps were in operation at that time, and a fourth—Sobibor—was to commence within a few weeks.
- ¹³ Apart from a few weeks at the very heights of Treblinka and Auschwitz, this is among the highest kill rates of the entire Holocaust.

PROFILES IN HISTORY

Murray Rothbard

Jett Rucker

Murray Rothbard's works taken as a whole "present the equivalent of a unified field theory of the social sciences," according to his biographer.¹ Born in 1926 in the Bronx to Russian-Jewish parents, he was a polymath of such broad erudition and accomplishment that his nominal classification as an "economist" captures a good deal less than half of his influence and published work. In the sixty-eight years of genial persuasion, trail-blazing analysis, penetrating research, and eloquent writing that ended with his death in 1995, Rothbard launched and powered the libertarian movement as no other single person has done before or since. He played central founding roles in the Cato Institute, the Libertarian Party, and the Ludwig von Mises Institute while writing a total of twenty-eight books and thousands of articles, memoranda, and letters. All this, he did with unfailing good cheer and respect for his opponents, such that he became known as the "happy warrior" of libertarianism.

Of this man's many parts, perhaps the largest could be formed from the intersection of two sub-parts: economics and history. On many occasions, he was a "pure" economist, while on others, he was a "pure" historian (he authored a four-volume history of the Revolutionary War period of the United States). But often and perhaps most-fruitfully, he melded the two roles both as an economic historian² and as a historian of economic thought. The capstone of his career was *An Austrian Perspective on the History of Economic Thought*, a multi-volume work on the third volume of which he was about to begin work when he died suddenly. The first two volumes, *Economic Thought before Adam Smith* and *Classical Economics*, by themselves delineate the tragedy that his death constituted for freedom and understanding.

As the son of Jewish immigrants in New York City in the 1930s, Rothbard grew up in an overwhelmingly collectivist, communistic subculture as literally the only conservative in his school. Being such an "ugly duckling" was, however, by no means a matter entirely of his own invention. Rothbard credits the teachings of his father, an industrial chemist who himself was a conspicuous nonconformist ideologically, for providing him the unique perspectives and values that underpinned his lifelong iconoclasy.

But what the younger Rothbard brought to the table was a penchant for laser-like analysis coupled with an uncompromising honesty both with others and with himself. When such a mind addresses any subject, be it economics, history, psychology, or politics, regnant fallacies tumble like wheat before the scythe. The result is inevitably and profoundly revisionist at every turn.

The single item of historical revision that seems at present to have the greatest importance to the largest number of people concerns the early Depression in the United States, on which immortal controversy Rothbard published the best, most comprehensive and final word in 1963 in his book *America's Great Depression*,³

coincidentally the same year (and city) in which the book was published that continues to hold far greater sway among far more people, Milton Friedman's and Anna Schwartz's *A Monetary History of the United States*.⁴ One of the many differences between Rothbard's book and that of the Nobel laureate is that Rothbard's book, like virtually everything he published, was thoroughly accessible to the interested lay reader, while Friedman's opus, at three times the length, was strictly for professional consumption.

The critical myth that Rothbard exploded once and for always was that President Herbert Hoover had resolutely maintained a *laissez-faire* hands-off economic policy that would have reversed the economic downturn that Franklin D. Roosevelt's unprecedented usurpations of the rights of private industry deepened and sustained into the Depression. Puncturing a beloved icon of the conservative Right, Rothbard detailed the numerous and invasive interventions conceived and launched by Hoover, of which Roosevelt's New Deal, as he showed, was only a continuation with little change in scope or direction. For this, he earned the undying enmity of many public and political figures who previously had regarded him as a supporter.



A young Murray Rothbard. Originally published by the Mises Institute. Released under the GNU Free Documentation License (GFDL). Source: Wikicommons.

Such a penalty was no surprise to Rothbard, nor did he regret having brought it on; he was accustomed to paying all manner of such “prices” for his forthrightness and incisiveness—the comparative obscurity in which his name languishes to the present day may be taken as a perverse monument to his fearlessness in the face of adverse opinion. In fact, Rothbard was moved on at least one occasion to comment on his often-demonstrated tendency to wreck his own career. Modestly quoting a comment made by an economist, Knut Wicksell, whose work he admired, Rothbard confessed an inability to resist speaking on an important matter that “nobody else was speaking about.” This, in turn, he claimed, was not born of any desire to be different, to seem audacious, or to be able to assert claims of precedence or discovery, but rather, of an unwillingness to let the neglect of something urgent continue.⁵ Such an impulse must strike a chord in the heart of any revisionist anywhere.

Continuing on the line of unpopular revisionism, Rothbard displayed little patience for the territorial aggressions of the state of Israel, nor for the mythology of the Holocaust providing moral cover for Israeli expansionism as long ago as 1967, when he published “War Guilt in the Middle East” in the Spring-Summer issue of the proto-libertarian journal *Left and Right*. In that article (<http://tinyurl.com/2aystg6>), he wrote:

“What a ‘clean wholesome feeling’ indeed when ‘Arab deaths don’t count!’ Is there any difference at all between this kind of attitude and that of the Nazi persecutors of the Jews whom our press has been attacking, day in and day out, for well over twenty years?”

With seeming prescience, he had barely a year earlier published his essay, “Revisionism for Our Time” in the *Rampart Journal of Individual Thought* for Spring 1966 (<http://tinyurl.com/2a34mts>). The unnamed war Rothbard here argued against would seem to have been the Vietnam War, but the Six-Day War of 1967 bears the brunt of the same essay quite as well. He ended his essay with this thought:

“[...] revisionism, in the final analysis, is based on truth and rationality. Truth and rationality are always the first victims in any war frenzy; and they are, therefore, once again an extremely rare commodity on today’s ‘market.’ Revisionism brings to the artificial frenzy of daily events and day-to-day propaganda, the cool but in the last analysis glorious light of historical truth.”

As time after World War II wore on, enemies of Rothbard’s revisionism (counter-revisionists?) began to coalesce and acquire visible identification with the expansionist projects of Israel. Along with Holocaust mythology,

their chief propagandistic weapon was the charge of anti-Semitism, always ironic when leveled against Rothbard. In December 1990, such behavior as manifested against Pat Buchanan became so egregious that Rothbard was compelled to pen “Pat Buchanan and the Menace of Anti-anti-Semitism” (<http://tinyurl.com/2bdyw9u>)⁶. Among many gems, it contains this one on a winner of the Nobel Peace Prize who remains today if anything a more-interesting subject of inquiry, Elie Wiesel:

“[...] this is the selfsame Wiesel who, in the early 1980s, pronounced his feelings to be favorable to none other than the monster [Rumanian dictator Nicolae] Ceausescu. Why? Because of Ceausescu’s pro-Israel foreign policy, naturally. Any man who confers his blessings upon one of the most savage butchers in the past half century, is scarcely qualified to hurl anathemas at anyone, much less at Pat Buchanan.”

As for the nature of his persuasions in the economic sphere, Rothbard became the dean of the Austrian school of economics upon the 1971 death of his teacher and mentor, Ludwig von Mises. The Institute named after Mises was formed by Rothbard and Rothbard’s friend and supporter Lewellyn Rockwell, in California in 1982, and it was as vice president for academic affairs that Rothbard lived out the very productive final years of his career. Rothbard experienced little to no period of decline prior to his 1995 heart attack. He was working at his accustomed high rate of productivity up to the very day of his death.

Perhaps the most-profound of Rothbard’s many and subtle findings from his numerous and penetrating inquiries concerns the influence of Adam Smith on both economics and the very course of history. In a nutshell, he concluded and demonstrated that, together with English economist David Ricardo, Smith developed and promoted a “labor theory of value” that not only imposed a setback on the development of economic theory, but also provided the essential logical springboard from which Karl Marx initiated and launched the worldwide communist revolution that engulfed so much of the Twentieth Century in fire and blood!

Rothbard arrived at these conclusions from a synthesis he made of the theories of Thomas Kuhn, author of *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*,⁷ and the economist Emil Kauder. Kauder argued that the Smithian/Ricardian labor theory of value set back economic theory for several generations by supplanting the findings of first Aristotle and then the so-called Spanish Scholastics of the Middle Ages regarding the true (“subjective”) manner in which prices and values arise in markets⁸. Kuhn demonstrated in his book how the long-term advances of science (and, by Rothbard’s ex-

tension, history and economics) are neither smooth in pace nor at all times upward. With a number of trenchant examples and thoroughgoing analysis, Kuhn established the understanding, still rarely encountered in popular discourse today, that advances in knowledge are plagued by frequent and occasionally serious *reverses* in which correct understandings are lost, even *expurgated*, in favor of newer, more-stylish fallacies that can arise from any of a number of sources.

While not every student of historical revision may be explicitly aware of such a principle, the phenomenon of historical revision itself is in fact founded upon it, and the proposition should encounter sympathy in virtually any and every practitioner or consumer of revision.

Working with this synthesis in his *History of Economic Thought*, Rothbard established not only that Adam Smith's virtually universal canonization as the patron saint of free-market economics is undeserved because of the long-preceding work of Aristotle and the Spanish Scholastics, but also that Smith's labor theory of value actually *undid* the sound foundation his predecessors had laid to explain values and the formation of prices in markets. And as corollary to this destruction, he demonstrated, Smith's vaunted work actually served as the linchpin for the ideological nemesis that Rothbard had resolutely stood against from his early boyhood: communism.

Notes

- ¹ Justin Raimondo. *An Enemy of the State*. Prometheus Books, Amherst, N. Y., 2000, p. 381.
- ² An excellent item of economic history grew out of his doctoral dissertation at Columbia, *A History of Money and Banking in the United States*. Ludwig von Mises Institute, Auburn, Ala., 2002.
- ³ Princeton, N. J.: D. Van Nostrand Co.
- ⁴ Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press.
- ⁵ Letter April 14, 1983 to Robert Kephart.
- ⁶ Murray Rothbard. *The Irrepressible Rothbard*. Center for Libertarian Studies, Burlingame, Cal., 2000, p. 42.
- ⁷ University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Ill., 1962. This is the book in which the phrase "paradigm shift" was introduced into popular discourse.
- ⁸ Emil Kauder. "Retarded Acceptance of the Marginal Utility Theory." *Quarterly Journal of Economics*. November 1953, and "Comment" August 1955.

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EDITORIAL

At War's End

Richard A. Widmann

Recent headlines announcing that World War One had finally ended were sure to raise an eyebrow among those of us who noticed. While even on-going wars like those in Iraq and Afghanistan are minor media stories dwarfed by the latest extravagances and debauchery of Hollywood's rich and famous and the momentary stars of "reality" TV, it's no wonder that most missed the end of "the War to End All Wars." While few of us are old enough to recall the actual fighting which drew to a close on 11 November 1918, the matter was apparently not officially closed until Germany had made its final payment. It was indeed that final payment to the war's victors that allowed the officials to declare "Game Over."

While this announcement may seem an unimportant matter in our age of iPods and iPhones, it highlights several key points for those of us who label ourselves "revisionists." While "setting history into accord with the facts" as Harry Barnes would have put it, is the stuff of which all good historical writing has always been composed, it was in the years that followed Europe's first great immolation that Revisionism was born. Attempting to revise the terms of the Armistice as laid out in the Treaty of Versailles, revisionists sought to move beyond the old hatreds that fueled the murder of millions to a common understanding among nations that would usher in a time of peace. Revisionists accurately prophesied that the economic punishment inflicted upon Germany as well as the humiliating coerced admission of guilt for the war's initiation would serve no purpose but to renew hostilities at the first possible moment. Indeed the economic sanctions and the Treaty of Versailles were key elements in the rise of National Socialism and the tremendous waste of life that became popularly known as World War Two.

Crippling economic sanctions appeared to be the nonviolent weapon of choice in the years following World War One. Sound economic theory would not only prevent "aggressor" nations from rebuilding a military, it would funnel the pillaged booty of those so foolish as to lay down their arms to those who refused to stop the bloodletting. We must note the sums which seemed crippling some 90 years ago seem insignificant when com-



Surprising headlines announce that World War One has finally ended in 2010. Those posing by this captured English tank surely anticipated an earlier end. By Aloahwild (Family photo from early part of 1900s, scan) [CC-BY-SA-3.0

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pared to the ridiculous spending of today's wars. If Germany has only now paid off World War One, when might we expect the current wars to be paid off?

From the standpoint of "perpetual war for perpetual peace" and the ulterior motives and baggage associated with such campaigns, revisionists may note that the "war against terror" is a considerable advance over the "cold war" and that, in turn, an advance over the hot wars against Germany and her allies.

Hot wars have an objective. There is a goal that can be easily understood by all; to destroy one's enemy. The enemy may be and often is cast as a monstrous villain who must be destroyed at all costs. Failure to annihilate "them" will mean sure annihilation of "us." But such hot wars come to an end – at least the fighting and economic hyperactivity with which they are so closely tied. The Cold War is a significant "improvement" as a concept. In the Cold War you get all the spending with little of the death and protests that come when a exhausted nation no longer recalls the reason to oppose foreign economic and social ideologies. With the War on Terror, the eternal threat of an extremist faith always ready to strike at the civilian population not only ensures unlimited budgets for military growth (wasn't it the Pentagon who recently asked to have its budget slashed because it

didn't know what to do with the funds?) but also the need to deploy our forces to the far-flung corners of the empire. It seems that out-of-control spending and self-inflicted debt can be our friend. With an economics-in-wonderland attitude no debt can ever be too high, and no debt will need be repaid. A lesson those silly fiscally responsible Huns could never understand!

As the declaration of World War One's end falls on indifferent ears, we must wonder when the wars that followed will come to an end. From the appearance of things, several may never end. By the time of World War Two, economic deprivation had been replaced with psychological persecution. This was not going to be the "guilt clause" of Versailles but the new hyper-guilt of Nuremberg – a guilt that was so great that no one would ever question the methods of the crusaders who slew the Nazi beast. Civilians would be marched through the camps. Those who did not see them personally would be subjected to the films made by horror-film director Alfred Hitchcock and other Hollywood talent flown in for the occasion. New words would be created, books would be written, memorials and museums would spring up in what might be described as the greatest faith-based movement of the second half of the 20th century.

While the payments for losing World War One eventually came to an end, shedding the guilt of World War Two amounts to denouncing the Virgin Mary as a harlot in the midst of the Inquisition – even analyzing the Nazi Holocaust is the heresy of the 20th and now 21st centuries. The guilt of World War Two and its associated atrocities are fundamental to our world vision, our expansion of empire and our perpetual wars. For every would-be tyrant, every former-friend-turned-despot, enables a military action if only to prevent another "Chamberlain at Munich." Every opportunity for diplomacy and peace is painted as foolishness that is better resolved by blitzkrieg. Any ideology other than social democracy is a threat that requires the speedy deployment of our well-armed forces. The empire spreads and the economy inflates. Even during our recent economic failures, the fear of mass depression (the worst since FDR's New Deal) prevents the conclusion of hostilities abroad. For without war we would surely feel the Depression's icy blast once again.

If the announcement of the end of World War One means anything for American revisionists, it simply means that our dream of the USA minding its own business, taking care of its own and dismantling its empire is out of reach. Our solutions to the world's woes are a heresy not unlike that of questioning the unique guilt and monstrosity of Germans. So focused are American court historians on our long-defeated enemy that they fail to rec-

ognize his likeness when they look in the mirror. But then again, why should we consider our national sins, (didn't the Japs in Nagasaki have it coming?) why should we wonder about the origin of so much of the world's hatred towards us? Why should we care while we have Facebook, reality TV, football and Hollywood? We are a nation that would forfeit its rights for a flat-screen TV and a home theater system. We are a naïve and self-absorbed people who is doomed to pay the reparations of war both in dollars and blood forever into an eternal future.

PAPERS

Evidence for the Presence of “Gassed” Jews in the Occupied Eastern Territories, Part 2

Thomas Kues

The following article is a continuation of Thomas Kues’s “Evidence for the Presence of “Gassed” Jews in the Occupied Eastern Territories, Part 1” on Page 223 of this volume. Thomas Kues’s analysis takes up the revisionist proposal that Jews sent to the “extermination camps” and allegedly gassed there were in fact deloused and then sent onward, the vast majority of them to the occupied eastern territories. The camps therefore actually functioned as transit camps. The transit camp hypothesis is in perfect harmony with documented National Socialist Jewish policy as expressed in official and internal reports, documents on the Jewish transports, and even in classified communications between leading SS members.

3. A Survey of the Testimonial Evidence (continued)

3.3.10. Lev Saevich Lansky and Isak Grünberg

Lev Saevich Lansky, who had been an inmate of the Maly Trostinec camp from 17 January 1942 onward, was interrogated by a Soviet investigative commission on 9 August 1944. Concerning the Jews deported from the *Altreich*, Austria and the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia to Maly Trostinec¹ (which is located 12 km southeast of Minsk),² Lansky made the following statement:³

“We all got soap and clothing from German Jews who had been slaughtered. There were ninety-nine transports of a thousand people each that came from Germany, Austria, and Czechoslovakia.”

When asked about the fate of these deportees, Lansky answered that they were “all shot.”⁴

It is generally agreed that five transports from Theresienstadt (Da220, Da222, Da224, Da226, Da228) reached Maly Trostinec between July and September 1942, and that each of them carried 1,000 deportees.⁵

Holocaust Historian Gertrude Schneider asserts that, except for a first transport departing on 28 November 1941, all transports from Vienna to the General District of *Weißruthenien* (White Ruthenia) “ended up at the killing grounds of Maly Trostinec,”⁶ despite the fact that said transports are listed in documents as bound for nearby Minsk. On the other hand Schneider also states that the transport departing Vienna on 6 May 1942 “arrived May 11 at the Minsk railroad station,” whereupon 81 Austrian Jewish deportees were “selected for work on the farm at Maly Trostinec.”⁷ Schneider also mentions a survivor from the transport departing Vienna on 27 May 1942 (Da-204), Marie Mack, who was later deported from the Minsk Ghetto to Lublin in September 1943;⁸ as well as the arrival of the 7 October 1942 transport (Da-230) at the Minsk railway station.⁹ Thus of the 25 transports departing Vienna for Minsk in 1942, only 22 or 23 could have been diverted to Maly Trostinec. If Lansky’s statement about the number of transports from the west to Maly Trostinec is correct (or more or less correct as to order of magnitude), where did the other 71 or 72 transports come from? Did further, indirect transports reach Maly Trostinec via the “extermination camps”?

German exterminationist historian Christian Gerlach writes that 18 Jewish transports from Germany, Austria and the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia to Minsk and the rest of *Generalbezirk Weißruthenien* were originally planned for the period 10 November – 16 December 1941, and a further 7 transports between 10 and 20 January 1942. In the end, however, due to the protests of *Generalkommissar* Kube, only a total of 7 transports were sent to Minsk in November and December, while all the January transports were cancelled. To compensate for the decreased number of transports, more convoys to Riga were added.¹⁰ The deportations were then commenced anew following the visits of Eichmann, Himmler and Heydrich to Belarus in March and April 1942.

Gerlach provides a list of 18 transports to *Weißruthenien* (today’s Belarus) that are “certain to have arrived” and 5 “uncertain” ones.¹¹ In the more comprehensive list provided by Graf and Mattogno there are a total 34 transports for the period in question (May-November 1942). Three of the “uncertain” transports in Gerlach’s list are not included in the latter: one from Theresienstadt departing on 13 June 1942 with some 1,000 deportees, one transport from Dachau which arrived sometime in June 1942 (attested to by a surviving deportee, Ernst S.), and one from an unknown origin arriving in the first half of August 1942 (attested to by an activity report of the “*Gruppe Arlt*” from 25 September 1942). The “uncertain” transport listed by Gerlach as departing from Theresienstadt on 20 August 1942 with

some 1,000 deportees is concluded by Graf and Mattogno to have been sent to Riga; Gerlach himself notes that “this transport, billed for Minsk, was possibly redirected.”¹² A further “uncertain” Theresienstadt transport (“Be”) departing on 1 September 1942 with some 1,000 deportees was in fact sent to Raasiku in Estonia, as confirmed by numerous eyewitnesses.¹³

As for the Theresienstadt transport departing on 13 June 1942, the Terezin Studies website¹⁴ lists a transport designated “AAi” as departing for an “unknown” destination on this date. The Dachau transport in June 1942 is yet more mysterious. We may recall here that the Swedish-Jewish periodical *Judisk Krönika* in its issue of October 1942 reported that Jews from Dachau and other German concentration camps had been deported to Pinsk for drainage work (cf. §3.1.3., Page 239 of this volume). Mainstream historiography knows of no transports of Jews from Dachau to the occupied eastern territories. It is documented that there were transports from Dachau to two of the “extermination camps,” namely Auschwitz and Majdanek. The numbers of these deportees amounted to 4,767 and 2,933 respectively. However, Danuta Czech lists no transports as arriving to Auschwitz from Dachau during June 1942, and the only known transports from Dachau to Majdanek took place in January and February 1944.¹⁵ The purported Dachau transport to Belarus remains an enigma.

It is when we take a look at transports departing from the Theresienstadt (Terezin) ghetto in October 1942 that things get really interesting. In 1993 the German historian Hans Safrian wrote:¹⁶

“In the summer of 1942 Minsk and Maly Trostinec became the end station for deportation transports from Central Europe, mainly from Terezin and Vienna. [...] The destination of five further deportation transports from Terezin in October 1942 has not yet been clarified. [...] In the circulation plan for October the station of Izbica [in the General Government] was designated as destination for the transports from Terezin, which suggests that these people were murdered in one of the ‘Aktion Reinhard’ death camps. Nonetheless there is evidence indicating that in October 1942 five trains from Theresienstadt were conducted to Minsk / Maly Trostinec.”

The “evidence” indicating that the five Theresienstadt transports Bt, Bu, Bv, Bw and Bx arrived in Maly Trostinec consists of a reference to H.G. Adler’s study *Der verwaltete Mensch* from 1974. In a previous study on the Theresienstadt Ghetto from 1955 Adler had concluded that the same transports were sent to Treblinka,¹⁷ but by 1974 he had changed his mind on the issue:¹⁸

“On 8 August 1942 a certain Dr. Engineer Jacobi of the General Management Office East [Generalbetriebsleitung Ost] of the German Reich Railway [Deutsche Reichsbahn] wrote to inform the Main Railway Offices in Minsk and Riga, the Reich Railway Head Office, the General Office of the Eastern Railways [Ostbahn] in Cracow and also the General Management Offices in Essen and Munich about the ‘Special trains [Sonderzüge] for resettlers, harvest workers and Jews in the period from 8 August to 30 October 1942’. To the cover letter was attached, among other things, a ‘circulation plan’ [Umlaufplan], which was later partially revised. The following trains, which were supposed to carry each 1,000 people, were assigned for the deportation of Jews (the declared destination Wolkowysk indicates Minsk): [...]

21 Sep. [1942] from Theresienstadt to Wolkowysk

23 Sep. from Nuremberg to Theresienstadt

24 Sep. from Vienna to Theresienstadt

26 Sep. from Berlin to Riga

27 Sep. from Darmstadt to Theresienstadt

28 Sep. from Vienna to Wolkowysk

1 Oct. from Vienna to Izbica

3 Oct. from Berlin to Riga

3 Oct. from Berlin to Theresienstadt

5 Oct. from Vienna to Wolkowysk

5 Oct. from Theresienstadt to Izbica

6 Oct. from Darmstadt to Theresienstadt

8 Oct. from Theresienstadt to Izbica

9 Oct. from Vienna to Theresienstadt

12 Oct. from Theresienstadt to Izbica

15 Oct. from Theresienstadt to Izbica

19 Oct. from Theresienstadt to Izbica

22 Oct. from Theresienstadt to Izbica

26 Oct. from Theresienstadt to Izbica

29 Oct. from Theresienstadt to Izbica

In this contemporaneous schedule [...] there are some aspects worthy of note. First of all Auschwitz was at this time still not intended as a destination for transports from the Reich proper. [...] Following the series of transports to Wolkowysk the destination of the transports departing Theresienstadt is given as Izbica from the beginning of October onward. In reality none of the deportees reached the ghettos in Izbica or in its vicinity, if not only as transit camps from where they were sent to the nearby extermination sites Belzec, Sobibor and Majdanek. The des-

tion Izbica thus refers to these sites. However, all of the transports from Theresienstadt during October 1942, with the exception of the last one on the 26th (from the 29th no more departed) with which began the series of convoys to Auschwitz, were in fact directed to the vicinity of Minsk and the extermination camp Trostinez which is here implied with the station Wolkowysk."

Czech Holocaust historian Miroslav Karny has made the following comment on Adler's later hypothesis:¹⁹

"In his newer work he [Adler] asserts that the October transports departing from Theresienstadt did instead arrive via Izbica at the extermination camp in Trostinez, 'which is here implied with the station Wolkowysk.' In no document relating to any of the October transports from Theresienstadt is Wolkowysk mentioned as a station where the 'travellers' would have to reembark on a freight train and continue their journey to Minsk or Koloditschi."

It is indeed true that Adler does not provide reference to a document stating that the October transports were routed to Wolkowysk (which is an important railway junction in western Belarus). What then prompted Adler to change his mind? As we will see below it was likely the testimony of a certain former Trostinec detainee.

Karny, like other mainstream historians, asserts that the Jews on the five transports Bt-Bx departing from Theresienstadt in October 1942 were killed in Treblinka. It is in fact clear that at least one of the five trains—the second transport departing on 8 October (Bu)—reached Treblinka, as one of the Jews on board, Richard Glazar, was picked out to work in the camp and later survived the Treblinka prisoner revolt to become a Holocaust witness.²⁰ Reportedly only a few dozen of the in total 8,000 Theresienstadt deportees were selected for work in Treblinka as Glazar was, while the rest were "gassed."²¹

Ironically, while criticizing Adler for not backing up his assertion, Holocaust historians like Karny are completely unable to provide any documentary proof of the alleged homicidal gas chambers in which these deportees were supposedly killed. The only one of their conclusions which is acceptable is thus that these five trains were sent to Treblinka—but from this does not follow that the Jews in the convoys were killed there.

What kind of transports arrived at the station of Maly Trostinec? In an account based mainly on West German court material, Paul Kohl has the following to say about this alleged extermination site:²²

"In the summer of 1942 a railway station was built by a one-way track near the collection point in the part of the camp closest to the [Minsk-Mogilev] road (the railway line had previously ended at Michanowice). The trains with Jews from the Reich, which had previously stopped at the Minsk freight yard, were now immediately redirected from there to Trostenez. Twice a week trains arrived from the Reich, from Poland, Czechoslovakia, Austria, France. They arrived on Tuesdays and Fridays and – in order to avoid commotion – always in the early morning between four and five o'clock. Also from the Dachau Concentration Camp a train arrived in June 1942."

In 1974 H.G. Adler described the Trostinec camp thus:²³

"In a small village, which before the occupation had constituted a kolchoz, the camp [Trostinec] was located; to this belonged an estate of 250 hectares. Here the prisoners were also housed, first in pig sties, later in barracks which each housed 150 to 160 people. During 1942 a total of 39,000 Jews from Germany, Austria, Bohemia-Moravia, Luxembourg, Holland and also from the Soviet Union were brought to Trostinetz, but in the camp itself there were never more than 640 Jews at one time, most of them Jews from Vienna; among the inmates there were also some hundreds of Russian prisoners of war."

Needless to say the dogma of mainstream historiography does not allow for transports of Jews from Poland, Holland, France or Luxembourg to Belarus.

If one or more trains arrived at the station "twice a week," as Kohl writes, this would mean that at least 50 convoys arrived at Trostinec during the second half of 1942. According to Gerlach, from 10 August 1942 on, all the Jewish deportation trains were redirected from Minsk to Trostinec via the Kolodischtschi station (15 km east of Minsk).²⁴ Yet if we look at the listed transports from 11 August to 28 November, we find that it contrasts with Kohl's description of the arrivals at Minsk/Maly Trostinec:

Date of Departure	Origin	Deportees	Interval (days)
11 Aug (Tue)	Vienna	1,000	
17 Aug (Mon)	Vienna	1,003	6
18 Aug (Tue)	Vienna	1,000	1
25 Aug (Tue)	Vienna	1,000	7
25 Aug (Tue)	Theresienstadt	1,000	0
31 Aug (Mon)	Vienna	967	6
1 Sept (Tue)	Vienna	1,000	1

Date of Departure	Origin	Deportees	Interval (days)
8 Sept (Tue)	Theresienstadt	1,000	7
14 Sept (Mon)	Vienna	992	6
22 Sept (Tue)	Theresienstadt	1,000	8
30 Sept (Wed)	Vienna	1,000	8
7 Oct (Wed)	Vienna	1,000	7
18 Nov (Sun)	Hamburg	908	11
28 Nov (Wed)	Vienna	999	10

We see here that the direct transports to Belarus during the period in question departed in general 6-8 days apart, and until 30 September always on Mondays or Tuesdays. From the memoirs of Karl Loewenstein we know that it took 4 days for a transport from Berlin to reach Minsk.²⁵ The trip from Vienna, Hamburg or Theresienstadt would probably not have taken much less or longer. Accordingly most of the transports would likely have reached Maly Trostinec on either a Thursday or a Friday (on a Saturday for three of the last four transports). How then could there also arrive transports weekly on Tuesdays, unless one allows for indirect transports arriving from the “extermination camps”? This, however, is exactly what is claimed by the Maly Trostinec eyewitness brought forward by Adler in his 1974 study: the Austrian Jew Isak Grünberg (b. 1891).

Grünberg was deported from Vienna on 5 October 1942 (according to him; preserved railway documents give the departure date as 7 October) and on 9 or 10 October 1942 reached Maly Trostinec, where Grünberg himself, his wife and their three children were selected for work in the camp. At their arrival, there were “already a lot of Jews” in the camp, “mainly from Poland.”²⁶ By this point in time there were, according to mainstream historiography, to follow only two more transports from the west to Belarus—one convoy departing from Hamburg on 18 November 1942 and another one departing Vienna on 28 November 1942—but according to Grünberg several transports from the west reached Trostinec in the months following his arrival.²⁷

“According to my estimate there were 1200 to 1300 Jews in the camp. This figure remained unchanged, the fresh supply [of manpower] was taken from camps, from Theresienstadt and Auschwitz and probably also from other ones. [...] Transport after transport arrived. Often we never even heard where they came from, since it frequently happened that all [of the deportees] were immediately liquidated.”

Further on in his testimony Grünberg estimates the number of Jews allegedly liquidated near Trostinec at “certainly 45,000 people at the least.”²⁸ It

is not made clear in the testimony whether this estimate refers to merely Grünberg's own period of stay at Trostinec or the whole operational period of the camp.

The mention of Auschwitz is crucial: here we have a witness who explicitly states, based on his own experience, that transports arrived in the occupied eastern territories from one of the "extermination camps." The mention of Theresienstadt is likewise of utmost importance: The last documented transport from Theresienstadt to Belarus departed on 22 September 1942, *i.e.* more than two weeks before Grünberg arrived in Trostinec. In October 1942, as has already been mentioned, five transports were sent from Theresienstadt to Treblinka:

Date of Departure	Designator	Deportees
5 October	Bt	1,000
8 October	Bu	1,000
15 October	Bv	1,998
19 October	Bw	1,984
22 October	Bx	2,018

From 26 October 1942 onward the Theresienstadt transports were sent to Auschwitz.²⁹

The transports from Theresienstadt which Grünberg states arrived at Trostinec following his own arrival at the camp on 9 or 10 October must therefore have arrived either via Auschwitz or Treblinka. Since Grünberg explicitly mentions Auschwitz together with Theresienstadt as origins of the transports it seems most likely that they reached Belarus via Treblinka. Possibly these deportees simply did not recall the name of this transit camp in the middle of nowhere, where they might have stayed only a few hours.

Unfortunately Grünberg does not state the nationality of the arrivals, although it is presumable that the Theresienstadt Jews were (for the most part) Czech. His statement that most of the Jews in the camp at the time of his arrival were Polish implies one or more undocumented Jewish transports from Poland. That transports of Polish Jews reached Trostinec is also maintained by Belarusian Holocaust historian Marat Botvinnik.³⁰ From where Kohl and Adler derive their assertions that also Jews from Luxembourg, Holland, France were sent to Trostinec is unclear. In Kohl's case it is possibly unpublished court material, in Adler's it is more likely other testimonial sources. Grünberg in his testimony mentions two Trostinec survivors who had returned to Austria: Julie Sebek and Siegmund Prinz.³¹

3.3.11. Yudi Farber, K. Sakowicz and Aba Gefen

Yudi Farber, a Russian-Jewish engineer, left an account in the early post-war years of how he was sent on 29 January 1944 to Ponary (also spelt Ponar, in Lithuanian Paneriai), an alleged extermination site north of Vilna, from where he managed to escape on 15 April 1944. In this we find the following passage describing his arrival at Ponary:³²

"We went under a canopy; there was a wooden structure that they referred to as a bunker, with a small kitchen. The women said that Jews from Vilnius and surrounding areas were living here. They were hiding in the ghetto but were found, sent to prison, and brought here. Kantorovich, whom I have already mentioned (he was from Vilnius), exchanged a few words with the women. They opened up and said that this was Ponary, where not only the Jews of Vilnius had been shot but also Jews from Czechoslovakia and France. Our job would be to burn the bodies."

Mainstream historiography knows of neither French nor Czechoslovakian Jews killed at Ponary. As mentioned in §2.3.3. (Page 229 of this volume), the only French Jews claimed by the orthodox historians to have reached the occupied eastern territories departed Drancy for Kovno and Tallinn on 15 May 1944. Any French Jews present in Lithuania prior to that date must accordingly have reached that destination via one of the "extermination camps" of Auschwitz-Birkenau or Sobibór.

Interestingly we find in the "Ponary diary" of Kazimierz Sakowicz the following entry dated 4 May 1943 in which this Polish journalist reports on a conversation with Lithuanian militia members stationed at Ponary:³³

"The Lithuanians say that they will have still more work to do, as Jews are to be brought here from abroad. Reportedly Jews from France, Belgium and so on are already being shot in the Fourth Fort in Kaunas [Kovno], where they were brought under the pretense that they would be transported to Sweden."

That Belgian Jews were transported to Lithuania is confirmed by a news notice appearing in *Aufbau* on 28 August 1942:³⁴

"Several hundreds of Belgian Jews, who had been deported to Wilna, were massacred by the Gestapo."

According to Jewish historian Reuben Ainsztein,³⁵

"entire train-loads of Czech, Dutch and French Jews were brought to what they believed to be the town of Ponary and exterminated there by German and Lithuanian killers."

Ainsztein does not provide a source, but since neither Sakowicz nor Farber mentions transports of Dutch Jews to Ponary it seems likely that there exists further testimony concerning transports of foreign Jews to this place. In this context it should also be noted that Ponary is located only some 5 km north-east of the town of Vievis, where, according to rumors reported in the diary of Herman Kruk (cf. §3.3.1., Page 244), 19,000 Dutch Jews had arrived by 16 April 1943. As for the alleged mass shootings of foreign Jews at the forts around Kovno, we read in the *Black Book*:³⁶

“Not only Kaunas Jews met their death in the mass graves near the forts; here the Nazis carried out the wholesale execution of thousands of Jews who had been driven there from the Lithuanian provinces, from Berlin, Vienna, France and Holland.”

The French Jews can be explained by the fact of Convoy 73 reaching Kovno in May 1944, but the mention of Dutch Jews is anomalous to exterminationist historiography.

A further witness stating that foreign Jews were brought to the Vilna area is the Lithuanian Jew and partisan Aba Gefen. On 16 May 1943 Gefen wrote in his diary:³⁷

“In the evening I visited Yonas Kazlovsky at Zhuk’s [a farmer]. He said that recently in Vilna 40,000 Jews—not from Lithuania, but from other countries—have been killed.”

Again the date fits well with Herman Kruk’s diary entry from 16 April 1943 and his subsequent entry from 30 April stating that 19,000 Dutch Jews deported to Lithuania had been “slaughtered” there (§3.3.1., Page 244).

3.3.12. Moses L. Rage

On 10 September 1944 a Latvian-Jewish engineer from Riga named Moses L. Rage (b. 1903) left a written testimony to a Soviet commission in Dvinsk (Daugavpils), in which we find the following passage:³⁸

“Subsequently [in the spring of 1942 or later] there began to arrive in Riga a series of trains with Jews from Poland, Germany, Belgium, Denmark, Holland and other countries, which were taken off the trains and sent away on trucks to be shot. Their belongings were sent to the Gestapo. I estimate that the total number of foreign Jews killed in Riga and other parts of Latvia exceeds 200,000.”

As mentioned in the first part of this series (§2.4.7., Page 233 of this volume) no Danish Jews were ever “gassed,” and accordingly Rage could not

have witnessed the arrival of Jews from that country in Riga, something which diminishes the value of this testimony. It seems possible though that the witness could have mistaken Norwegian Jews for Danish Jews. 346 Jews from Norway were allegedly “gassed” in Auschwitz in October 1942.

3.3.13. M. Morein

In his book on the Holocaust in Latvia, Bernhard Press provides the following brief summary of a testimony left by a certain M. Morein which is stored in the archive of the Jewish Information Center in Riga:³⁹

“[...] while looking for the corpses of his parents in 1946 near the village of Kukas near Krustpils, he discovered in a mass grave corpses whose clothes bore French labels.”

It is not made clear whether with “French labels” is meant French star of David patches or similar. The author of this article has not yet been able to access the testimony in question.

3.3.14. Szema G.

A Latvian Jewess identified in the court material only as “Szema G” testified in 1948 that groups of Belgian, Dutch, French and Hungarian Jews⁴⁰ were sent to the Lenta camp near Riga.⁴¹ The value of this testimony is diminished by the fact that the witness incorrectly claimed that a crematory oven was installed in Lenta.

That foreign Jews were brought to the Lenta camp is supported, however, by other eyewitnesses. I have already discussed Jack Ratz’s mention of Polish Jews being sent to Lenta “straight from Poland” in the summer of 1943 (§3.3.9., Page 265). Another Lenta inmate, Abrahm Bloch, has stated:⁴²

“To us came a small group of Jews from Vilna. For Lenta this was not a surprise. They brought to us Jews from the most different places.”

This indicates that foreign (*i.e.* non-Latvian) Jews were commonplace in Lenta. In this context one should note the following passage from a monthly report drawn up by the labor administration department of the *Gebietskommissariat* Riga for April 1943:⁴³

“Lately there have been no new arrivals of Jews. [...] Following the deployment of all Jewish auxiliary workers [Hilfsarbeiter] outside of Riga, and since the removal of Jewish skilled labor from the armaments industry—the production and supply of arms being of extraordinarily

great importance—can no longer be justified, the influx of Jews from territories outside of Latvia is to be thoroughly welcomed.”

This acute need for Jewish labor would explain why Jews from Poland and possibly also from various Western European nations were sent to the Lenta camp in the summer of 1943. The last documented transport from Germany, Austria and the Protectorate to Latvia departed from Theresienstadt on 20 August 1942, although there are indications that a transport departing from Berlin on 26 October 1942 reached Salaspils near Riga (cf. §3.4. Page 485). Considering this, it seems decidedly odd that a lull in transports lasting a whole 5-7 months should be described using the word “lately” (*“in der letzten Zeit”*). Were there more transports of Jews to Latvia during the last months of 1942, or even at the beginning of 1943?

One might argue that any foreign Jews sent to Latvia in 1943 might have been Lithuanian. Herman Kruk, however, does not mention any Jewish transports from Lithuania to Latvia during that year, and as of 6 April 1943, the Kovno Judenrat secretary Avraham Tory had recorded only two transports of Lithuanian Jews to Latvia (both from Kovno to Riga): the first, consisting of 500 workers, on 6 February 1942; the second, consisting of more than 300 people, on 23 October 1942.⁴⁴ In his diary entry from 12 February 1943 Tory mentions a German demand that 1,000 Kovno Jews be sent to Riga,⁴⁵ but this demand was apparently rescinded, because Tory, who due to his position necessarily would be aware of any major transports from the Kovno ghetto, does not record any transports from the Kovno Ghetto (or any other place in Lithuania) to Latvia during 1943. Bloch’s statement hints at a transport of Vilna Jews to Riga, but this must have been small to escape Kruk’s attention. Possibly some Vilna Jews reached Riga after the liquidation of the Vilna Ghetto on 23 September 1943, *i.e.* five months after the above quoted labor administration report. There further exist no indications that Jews were sent from other parts of *Reichskommissariat Ostland*, or for that matter the Ukraine, to Latvia for work.

It should be mentioned here that Dutch Jews deported to the Baltic states in 1942-1943 apparently were alive not only in Kuremäe, Estonia (cf. 3.3.7., Page 261), but also in western Latvia in 1944, for in the *Aufbau* issue from 25 August 1944 we read:⁴⁶

“Six hundred Jews, used by the Germans for forced labor on fortifications in occupied Latvia, were to be transferred to Liepāja. On the way there they were liberated by partisans. Most of them were deportees from Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Holland. Immediately af-

ter being liberated all of them joined the Latvian partisan units. This report comes from the Stockholm newspaper Baltiska Nyheter."

3.3.15. Kalmen Linkimer

Another minor testimony concerning transports to Latvia is the diary of Kalmen Linkimer, a Jewish schoolteacher from Liepaja (Libau) who spent most of the second half of the war hiding in a cellar together with ten other Jews. In his diary entry from 10 June 1944, we read:⁴⁷

"[The Latvians] so distinguished themselves through their blood thirst and brutality that Jews were sent from countries all over Europe to Latvia, Riga [...]"

The use of the expression "all over Europe" certainly implies transports to Latvia of Jews from countries other than just Germany, Austria and the Protectorate. Unfortunately, Linkimer does not bring up the subject elsewhere in his diary.

3.3.16. Yehuda Lerner

Yehuda (Leon) Lerner is primarily known as a Sobibór eyewitness. He was deported to this "pure extermination camp" from Minsk in the second half of September 1943⁴⁸ under the "pretense" that the Jews in this convoy would be sent to work in Łódź.⁴⁹

What is remarkable about Lerner is the fact that he had previously been sent from Warsaw to the occupied eastern territories. Lerner was born in Warsaw in 1926, and it was from there that he was sent to Belarus in the summer of 1942. In a brief, undated testimony (written sometime between 1951 and 1978)⁵⁰ presented by M. Novitch we read:⁵¹

"I was born in Warsaw in a family of six; my father was a baker. When war was declared, our life in the ghetto was similar to that of most Jews: unemployment, hunger and anguish. On July 22, 1943, tragedy began in the ghetto. The president of the Jewish council committed suicide and, on the same day, my father, my mother, one of my brothers and I were taken away to the Umschlagsplatz, the ghetto station, and were left in a building. My whole family was deported and never came back.

I was sent to a camp near Smolensk, in occupied Russia, where I remained for ten months. Our job consisted of building an airfield. For our work, we got a piece of bread and a bowl of soup. Hunger weakened us and prisoners who had no strength to work were taken to a wood and executed. Haim, a friend from the Warsaw Ghetto, was with

me. There also were German Jews, in transit through Warsaw. I told my friend, 'Let us escape, we are doomed here.'

Four months later, on a dark night, we crossed the barbed wire, but we were caught and sent to another camp where we again found hard work, hunger and beating. We tried to escape a second time, managed to be free for several days, but once more were arrested and taken to the Minsk ghetto."

The president of the Jewish Council of the Warsaw Ghetto, Adam Czer-niaków, committed suicide on 23 July 1942. On the day before, the first train with Jewish deportees left Warsaw for the Treblinka "extermination camp."

In 1979 Lerner was interviewed by Claude Lanzmann (in French, using an interpreter). A film of this interview was later released together with a published transcript,⁵² but this does not contain the entire interview; especially the beginning has been cut short. Fortunately, a complete transcript is available online. In this Lerner dates his deportation to July 22:⁵³

"[...] all starts on July 22, 1942, at the moment when they make us leave the Warsaw Ghetto; they gather us at the Umschlagsplatz and they tell us that they are going to send some of us off, they do not know where yet; at this moment, I am still with my parents, with my family, but very quickly we are separated, they send me to one side, my parents and my family to the other, and from that moment I am alone. They tell us that in some days they would send us into a work camp, and effectively, after these few days still spent in Warsaw, we leave for Russia."

This indicates that the transport in question departed from Warsaw some-time during the last week of July. Later in the interview the period between the arrest and the departure is stated to have been "several days." Lerner further tells Lanzmann that the convoy consisted of "some thousands of young people," all able to work.⁵⁴ The journey is described as follows:⁵⁵

"Lerner: And so, it is there that everything started; for nearly a week, we traveled in these freight cars; each day we were given a little water through the door. After we were placed in the freight cars, they distributed to us a loaf of bread each, and soon we arrived in Belorussia and we were unloaded for work, the place where we arrived was located near an old airport.

Lanzmann: What was it called?

Lerner: The name of the place, I do not remember exactly, in any case it was an airfield and we were working in construction, we were constructing buildings; the conditions were very hard, very little to eat, the

Germans on the spot fired on the Jews, without reason, and in particular the pilots when they returned in the evening, got drunk and amused themselves by shooting, firing on the Jews, in the head in general.

Lanzmann: This was a military airport?

Lerner: Yes, military.

Lanzmann: And this, this is the first place where he [i.e. Lerner] had been, after having left Warsaw?

Lerner: Yes, yes, the first place."

Historian Christian Gerlach states that the transport carrying Lerner arrived in Bobruisk on 28 July and that a part of this convoy continued on to Smolensk.⁵⁶ The only source that Gerlach gives here, however, is the Lerner account found in the Novitch anthology, which does not mention any stop-over in Bobruisk. Moreover Gerlach writes that the 28 July Bobruisk transport together with a previous transport of 961 Jews from Warsaw to Bobruisk on 30 May 1942 consisted of in all some 1,500 people,⁵⁷ so that the latter convoy would have contained approximately 540 Jews—in contrast with Lerner's statement to Lanzmann that the deportees of his transport numbered "some thousands." Apparently the only thing certain about this transport is that it took place, since there is no doubt that Lerner later was sent to Sobibór from Belarus. Thus we have only Lerner's personal assurance that the train did not stop anywhere on the way from Warsaw to Smolensk—for example in Treblinka.

On 17 August 1942 the clandestine Polish newspaper *Informacja Bieżąca* mentioned that 2,000 "skilled workers" had been sent from the Warsaw Ghetto to Smolensk on 1 August 1942. Some weeks later, on 7 September, the same newspaper reported that two transports carrying a total of some 4,000 Jews had been sent from Warsaw to work on military installations in Brzesc and Malachowicze.⁵⁸

This raises the question: were there perhaps not one, but two transports from Warsaw to Smolensk during the first week of the great evacuation—one with some 540 Jews that reached Bobruisk on 28 July and another with 2,000 Jews, that departed from Warsaw on 1 August, travelling directly to Smolensk?

Lerner's statement that there "were German Jews" in the camp in Smolensk who had arrived there from Warsaw is intriguing. From the diary of the aforementioned Warsaw *Judenälteste* Adam Czerniaków we know that during the spring of 1942, some 4,000 Jews from the territory of the Reich and the Protectorate were deported to the Warsaw Ghetto. On 1 April there arrived "1,000 expellees from Hannover, Gelsenkirchen etc." who were "put in the quarantine at 109 Leszno Street." This convoy consisted of

“older people [but no-one older than 68], many women, small children.”⁵⁹ On 5 April there arrived “1,025 expellees from Berlin,” “mainly older people, partly intelligentsia.” These were also put in the quarantine at Leszno Street, which now contained in all “2,019 persons” (implying that the first convoy consisted of 994 deportees).⁶⁰ On 8 April Czerniaków visited the Jews “from Berlin, Frankfurt, Hannover, Gelsenkirchen etc.” in the quarantine, distributed candy to the children and “addressed the youth” among them.⁶¹ Two days later “150 young German Jews” were sent to “Treblinka,”⁶² by which is no doubt meant the labor camp Treblinka I, as the “extermination camp” Treblinka II would not open until three and a half months later. Considering the descriptions of the two first German convoys, these 150 deportees must have made up most if not all of the youths among the quarantined German Jews. On 16 April a third transport of “about 1,000” German Jews arrived in the ghetto.⁶³ On 18 April Czerniakow was called to see the ghetto commandant Auerswald about the German Jews.⁶⁴

“He gave me a list containing 78 names from the last transport; these people are to be sent to Treblinka. Besides he gave me two letters from the workers who are already there. One is asking for phonograph records, the other for tools.”

On 23 April a “transport of 1,000 people arrived from Bohemia.”⁶⁵ Almost a month later, on 23 May, Czerniaków noted that “thirty Jews” had been sent to Treblinka, but he neglected to mention whether these were Polish or German Jews.⁶⁶ Then finally on 16 July 1942, six days prior to the start of the great evacuation, the *Judenälteste* mentioned in his diary that 1,700 German Jews had been released from the quarantine.⁶⁷

Very little documentation on the great Warsaw evacuation has survived. We do not know when the German Jews in the ghetto were sent to Treblinka. It may be that the German Jews from Warsaw whom Lerner met in Smolensk were identical with those 150 or so young Jews who had been sent to Treblinka I in April, and that those for some reason had been transferred east, but it is also possible that they had reached Russia via the Treblinka “extermination camp” during the first days of the deportations.⁶⁸ A member of the Warsaw Ghetto police noted in his diary:⁶⁹

“The tenants of two hostels [that housed Jewish refugees from Germany and Czechoslovakia] received a day’s notice that they must leave on the morrow. They had already undergone so many moves from city to city and country to country that they showed no signs of despair or fear. Warsaw or Vilna, Smolensk or Kiev—it was all the same to them.”

Is it just coincidence that Smolensk is mentioned here as a possible destination?

It should be mentioned here in passing that there is testimonial evidence for the presence of German Jews also in Bobruisk. In 1971 a German witness testified that he had met and spoken with a German Jew from Mönchengladbach in the *SS-Arbeitslager* Bobruisk.⁷⁰ The Jews from Mönchengladbach were sent to Auschwitz, Łódź, Riga, and Theresienstadt.⁷¹ Those sent to Riga went there via Düsseldorf, and included the witness Hilde Sherman-Zander (§3.3.2., Page 255).⁷²

3.3.17. Inge Stolten

Inge Stolten (born 1924) was a German stage actress and playwright. During the war she performed for German troops in Germany as well as at theatres in the occupied territories. In late July 1943 she was sent to Minsk,⁷³ where at the Minsk Theatre she got into contact with some German Jews from the Minsk ghetto who worked backstage. In the description of the Minsk ghetto found in her memoirs, Stolten mentions also Dutch Jews:⁷⁴

“I heard of Dutch Jews who still believed that their furniture would be forwarded to them as promised, who discussed how they would be able to fit their great armchairs into the all-too-small rooms. Thus almost all of them hung on to some kind of illusion, nourished hopes and felt secure once they had escaped something.”

For more on the presence of Dutch Jews in Minsk, see §3.5 on Page 494 .

3.3.18. Tssetsilia Mikhaylovna Shapiro

The testimony of Dr. Tssetsilia Mikhaylovna Shapiro, a former inmate of the Minsk Ghetto, was recorded on 20 September 1944 by A.V. Veysbrod. This witness, who escaped from Minsk in early November 1942, stated that French Jews had been present in this city.⁷⁵

3.3.19. Avraham Tory (Golub)

Avraham Tory (aka Avraham Golub, b. 1909) served as secretary of the Jewish Council in the Kovno Ghetto. During the period 1941-1944 Tory kept a diary in which he also reproduced several orders and reports from the Council as well as the German ghetto administration.

In Tory’s diary entry from 14 July 1942 we read:⁷⁶

“Four Jews from Lodz have been brought to the [Kovno] Ghetto hospital for surgery. They had spent a long time in a labor camp.”

On 30 July 1942 Tory again wrote of Łódź Jews in Lithuania.⁷⁷

"The Lodz Jews who had been employed at the construction of the Kovno-Vilna highway and were transferred to Riga will be replaced by 500 workers from the Ghetto."

In the same entry, Tory writes:⁷⁸

"Five Jews who risked their lives by escaping from a labor camp, where they had been employed at highway construction, arrived in the Ghetto, having traveled by various routes. The inmates of this labor camp had been transferred by road to Riga, and fifty Jews escaped during the transfer. As they jumped off the trucks, they were shot at. Two of the escapees waded into the [unnamed] river and remained hiding there, submerged in the water up to their necks. After the first danger passed, they entered the forest and hid there. Then they traveled by roundabout paths until they reached Kovno."

We further learn about the unnamed labor camp the following:⁷⁹

"The camp commandant pretended to be the friend of workers. In reality, he disposed of everyone who, for different reasons, fell behind in his work. One day twenty people were killed by injections of poison, having been told beforehand that they were exhausted and sick and needed some rest. Those who asked to be taken to a physician were taken to the forest and shot. Only four inmates were brought to the Ghetto hospital for surgery; there they remain as of now.

The Council extended assistance to the inmates of this labor camp. This assistance was of some help. But the inmates were desperate and availed themselves of every opportunity to flee, despite the risk to their lives.

Fifteen of those people are now in the Ghetto. First, they were cleaned of lice at the lice disinfection center. They have also received clothes, which enable them to conceal their condition and status in the Ghetto. They must also be protected from the evil eye. At the same time, however, they present the [Jewish] Council with a problem: should the Gestapo find out about their presence in the Ghetto, their fate will be one and the same—death."

The above diary passages indicate that several hundreds of Jews from Łódź were confined in a labor camp somewhere between Kovno and Vilna, not far from a river, and that this group was transferred to Riga sometime in late July 1942. Likely Tory refrained from naming the camp here due to concerns of security, as mentioned in the diary entry itself.



Illustration 1. Map of Vievis and its vicinity. (Source: Section of *Deutsche Heereskarte 1:100 000 Truppenausgabe Nr. 1 vom VII. 1944, Großblatt Nr. 324 Koschedoren*)⁸³

In this context one may recall Herman Kruk's diary entry (cf. §3.3.1., Page 244) from 4 July 1942 reporting on the presence in Vilna of two young Jews who had been deported from Łódź in March the same year, and who had escaped from an unnamed labor camp around the 25th of June. Needless to say the escapees mentioned by Tory and the escapees with which Kruk came into contact might have come from two different labor camps.

Which camp then is Tory referring to? Later in the diary he mentions that the camps Miligan (Milejgany), Vievis and Zezmer (Ziezmariai) employed "thousands of Jews" working on the construction of the Kovno-Vilna highway; in charge of these labor camps was "the Kovno branch of the Todt organization."⁸⁰ Much points to Vievis being the camp in question, because at the end of the 30 July 1942 entry we find the following isolated sentence:⁸¹

"Five Jews from the labor camp near Vievis arrived in the Ghetto. They were given clothes and underwear."



Illustration 2. Map of the area north-west of Vilna with Ziezmariai and Vievis underlined by the author. (Source: Section of Internationale Weltkarte 1:1 000 000 Sonderausgabe IV.1941 Ber. V.41 N-35 Wilna).

It seems highly unlikely that two groups of five Jews each with ragged clothes had arrived from two different labor camps to the Kovno Ghetto on the same day. Tory – who was a lawyer by profession—may have thought it safe to mention the name of the camp in an isolated sentence where the circumstances of the arrival of the five Jews were not made explicit. That the Jewish Council of Kovno did in fact “extend assistance to the inmates” of Vievis is clear from the diary entry of 2 July 1943, in which we read that “Yellin, the representative of Vievis camp” visited the Kovno Ghetto “once every two or three weeks to collect wooden shoes, underwear, and other supplies from our welfare department” and that “Once in a while, patients from Vievis camp are admitted to our Ghetto hospital.”⁸²

A look at a map of the Vievis area (Illustration 1) shows a wooded area to the east of the town, which may be the “forest” where sick inmates reportedly were taken to be shot. The “river” in which escapees hid themselves might have been the Streva, a tributary of the Nemunas River. The Streva runs along the road from Vilna to Kovno at a shorter distance for a stretch between Vievis and Rumsiskas (cf. Illustration 2).

Finally, in the diary entry from 10 December 1942, we read:⁸⁴

“A young girl by the name of Zisling has come to the Ghetto from the labor camp in Vievis.”

Without at least a given name and an approximate date of birth it is nigh unto impossible to identify this individual. Nonetheless we may note that a search of the online Yad Vashem Central Database of Shoah Victims’

Names,⁸⁵ which reportedly contains records of close to 3 million individuals—with the caveat that “some people appear in more than one record”) ⁸⁶— produces a mere 29 results for the surname “Zisling” with variants (Cizling, Zysling, Tzizling), whereof almost half are duplicates. We are thus dealing with a very rare Jewish surname. Of these search results, the following pertain to young girls:

- Lea Cizling, born to Benjamin and Khana Cizling, nee Pinta. She reportedly died in Skuodas, Lithuania, in 1941, aged 11.
- Zelda Zysling, born in April 1926 in Klodawa,⁸⁷ Poland, to Baruch and Sara Zysling nee Skowronski. Reportedly killed in Chełmno aged 14.⁸⁸
- Zalma Zysling, the sister of Zelda Zysling, born 19 December 1930, also supposedly gassed at Chełmno.⁸⁹
- Deborah Zisling, sister of Zelda and Zalma Zysling, supposedly gassed at Chełmno in 1942 at the age of 19.
- Pese Zysling, born in Klodawa in 1924, supposedly gassed at Chełmno in 1942.

This inconclusive yet notable information compels the question: Were Jews who had been transited via Chełmno still present in Vievis in late 1942? Did the transfer to Riga in July 1942 perhaps encompass only the able-bodied or skilled workers? Research into local archives might possibly provide more information on transports to and from the Vievis camp.

The diaries of Avraham Tory and Herman Kruk indicate that the Vievis camp served as a major destination and/or transit point for Jews deported to the East: First in 1942 Jews from the Warthegau district were sent there via Chełmno, and then in early 1943 Dutch Jews reached the camp via Auschwitz and Sobibór. Many of these Jews were apparently employed in the construction of a highway between Vilna and Kovno. This brings to mind the following passage from Himmler’s speech in Bad Tölz on 23 November 1942:⁹⁰

“The Jew has been removed from Germany; he now lives in the East and works on our roads, railways etc.”

A Partial List of Camps with Jewish Detainees in Lithuania

Abbreviations for Main Sources

T: A. Tory, *Surviving the Holocaust* (Harvard University Press 1990).

K: H. Kruk, *The Last Days of the Jerusalem of Lithuania* (Yale University Press 2002)

NL: Martin Weinmann (ed.), *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem*.⁹¹

List of Camps

Aleksotas – labor camp in western Kovno suburb at the site of an airfield (*NL* p. 665, *T* p. 455).

Babtai – camp where some 1,500 Jews were employed at an “*Heeresbaudienststelle*” (army construction bureau).⁹²

Batcum – camp belonging to the Siauliai (Schaulen) Ghetto with 500-1,000 inmates, established 1942, closed 1944 (*NL*, p. 665).

Bezdaný – peat-digging camp 25 km from Vilna (*K*, p. 120, 486).

Biala Waka – peat-digging camp 14 km from Vilna (*K*, p. 120, 407).⁹³

Darbenai – camp in the Kretinga district.⁹⁴

Demitrau (Dimitravas) – camp in the Kretinga district.⁹⁵

Ezereliai (Ezerilis) – subcamp to KL Kauen (Kovno) with accommodations for 1,200 Jews.⁹⁶

Jonava – labor camp with some hundred inmates.⁹⁷

Kacergin – Jewish tree-felling unit located in suburb of Kovno (*T*, p. 114).

Kailis – “Jewish labor camp” inside Vilna (*K*, pp. 134-135).

KL Kauen (Kovno) – concentration camp replacing the liquidated Kovno Ghetto in June 1943, closed on 25 July 1944 (*NL*, p. 299).

Kazlu-Ruda (Raudondvaris) – subcamp to KL Kauen with 300 Jewish inmates some 20 km south of Kovno, established in early 1944.⁹⁸

Keidan – labor camp connected with the construction of an airfield (*T*, pp. 448-453). May be the same as Kedanen/Kidarniai (*NL*).

Kiena – peat-digging camp, likely near Vilna, apparently run by Organization Todt (*K*, p. 120, 366, 630). Likely identical with the Keni labor camp mentioned by Tory, who asserts that all of the camp inmates, “300 in all,” were burned alive in July 1943 (*T*, p. 430).

Koschedaren (Kaisiadorys) – Tory gives the name as Koshedar (*T*, p. 482), but also as Kaisiadorys: “the peat-digging camp at Kaisiadorys, where 350 Ghetto residents do forced labor” (*T*, p. 454).

Kybartai – small town on German border with Jewish camp or labor unit (*T*, p. 113).

Linkaiciai (Linkeitz) – labor camp halfway between Kovno and Siauliai where Jews worked in army factories and warehouses, a sugar refinery and with peat digging (*T* p. 126, 460).

Marijampolė – Army camp in the vicinity of this city to which 400 Kovno Jews were transferred in late September 1943 (*T*, p. 482).

Miligan (Milejgany) – labor camp for road construction (*T*, pp. 389-390, 492).

Nowa Wiljeka – Jewish labor camp in the town of the same name (*K*, p. 485).

- Oszmianka** – labor camp run by Organization Todt, located near the town of Oszmiana (*K*, p. 621).
- Palemonas** – peat-digging camp 10 km from Kovno; a brick factory was also located here (*T*, p. 58, 60, 92, 482).
- Panemune** – labor (possibly peat digging) camp.⁹⁹
- Panevezys (Ponevezh)** – City in northern Lithuania where a ghetto and later a Jewish camp was located; according to the witness Reska Weiss there lived as many as 30,000 Jews in the camp in the summer of 1944, mainly Baltic Jews.¹⁰⁰
- Petrasunai (Petrasun)** – Kovno suburb where Jews worked in a paper factory and at an electric power plant, accommodations for 5,000 Jews were reportedly under construction here in August 1943 (*T*, p. 116, 188, 455).
- Podbrodzie** – labor camp or site to where 400 Vilna Jews were sent in early May 1942 (*K*, pp. 286-287).
- Porubanek** – groups of Jews worked here in early 1942 with unpacking and sorting weapons and ammunition (*K*, p. 173).
- Provienishok (Pravieniskis)** – labor camp 20 km south-east of Kovno (*T*, p. 115). This is likely the same camp as Prawienischken or Proveniskai-ai, which according to *NL* (p. 666) housed 5,000 – 6,000 inmates “working in the woods”; it was established in 1941 and closed sometime in 1944 .
- Radvilishok (Radviliskis)** – ghetto and peat-digging labor camp in central Lithuania, railway junction (*T*, p. 113).
- Rudziszki** – labor camp (*K*, p. 629).
- Rzesza** – peat-digging camp 15 km from Vilna with a few hundred Jewish detainees (*K*, p. 118, 366).
- Sanciai (Schantz)** – labor camp in a suburb of Kovno (*T*, p. 318, 455, 482, 501).
- Siauliai (Schaulen)** – the ghetto in this city in north-western Lithuania was the third largest in the country; after its liquidation it was replaced on 17 September 1943 with Concentration Camp Schaulen. Inmates evacuated to Stutthof on 21 July 1944. According to the aforementioned Reska Weiss it held as many as 30,000 Jews in the summer of 1944.¹⁰¹
- Sorok Tatary** – forestry labor camp 15 km from Vilna (*K*, p. 400).
- Swieciany** – Jewish labor camp about 80 km from Vilna (*K*, p. 485, 513).
- Veivirzenai** – camp located between Taurage and Kretinga employing Jewish women in agricultural labor (*K*, p. 483).
- Vievis** – Jewish labor camp near the town of Vievis (cf. §3.3.1., Page 244).
- Volary** – camp for Jews (*NL*, p. 299).

Vyzuonos – an agricultural camp or labor unit called the “Red Plantation” was located near the town of Vyzuonos in 1943.¹⁰²

Zasliai – Jewish labor camp run by *Organisation Todt* (K, p. 485, 533).

Zatrocze – agricultural/peat digging camp not far from Trakai (Troki), which is located some 20 km west of Vilna (K, p. 346, 447).

Zeżmer (Ziezmariiai) – labor camp for road construction with at least 400 Jewish detainees in early May 1943. Located 50 km north-west of Kovno. The camp was technically affiliated with the Vilna Ghetto but received aid from the Kovno Ghetto Council (T, p. 162-163, 329). In early May 1943 the camp housed 1,200 Jews, “including 180 children and a number of old people,” brought there from Oszmiana and other towns in the Vilna district; some of these were later transferred to Dno near Pskov, 680 others to the Kovno Ghetto (T, p. 328, 376). According to H. Kruk the camp housed 1,200 – 1,500 Jews (K, p. 554). It appears to have been at least formally run by *Organisation Todt* (K, p. 533).

Aside from the three major Lithuanian ghettos of Vilna (Vilnius), Kovno (Kaunas) and Schaulen (Siauliai) there existed a number of minor ghettos, many of them in the small part of northwestern Belarus which had been incorporated into Generalbezirk Litauen: Soly (T pp. 273-274, 486), Oszmiana (K p. 387), Michaliszki (K, p. 486), Smorgonie (reportedly there existed two ghettos in this town; K, p. 629, NL p. 666), Krewo (NL *ibid.*), Ziezmariiai (*ibid.*) and Nieswiez (*ibid.*).

Reading orthodox literature on the Holocaust in Lithuania one generally gains the impression that there existed only a handful of camps in this country during the German occupation. However, as seen above, a minor survey of some easily available sources clearly indicates that there existed at least some 43 camps with Jewish detainees on Lithuanian soil. Of the camps listed some 90% were located in south-eastern Lithuania, near Vilna or Kovno. How many camps existed in other parts of the country that the authors of these sources were either not aware of or had no reason to mention?

A possible explanation for the seeming ignorance of the mainstream historians on this issue could be that the large number of camps does not square very well with the firmly established belief that some 75% of the Lithuanian Jews had been killed already by early 1942, and that the vast majority of the survivors were housed in the three major ghettos.¹⁰³ This is not to say that all the Lithuanian Jews allegedly murdered by the *Einsatzgruppen* were in fact transferred to these labor camps. While some of them probably were indeed shot—as communists, resistance members, hostages, carriers of epidemic diseases, or for other reasons—many may

also have been deported out of Lithuania. Herman Kruk, in a diary entry dated 11 July 1942, mentions a Vilna Jew living undercover with “Aryan” papers in Belarus, according to whom “a lot of Jews from Vilna and Kovno are working in Minsk.”¹⁰⁴ In the April 1942 issue of *Contemporary Jewish Record* we read concerning the “over 30,000” Jews removed from the Vilna ghetto (up until February 1942) that “it is believed that half are now in labor camps on the Soviet front, and the remainder have either been interned or executed.”¹⁰⁵ According to mainstream historiography these Jews were slaughtered en masse at Ponary.

As for the populations of the respective camps, there is a near-total lack of reliable figures. The few available figures are frequently based not on documentary sources but witness testimony. One should note that even if such estimates are taken to be more or less correct, they typically reflect the inmate population at only one given time; needless to say, the populations as well as holding capacities of the camps could have fluctuated. Future archival research may perhaps bring more clarity on this issue. It is also possible that aerial photographs, which we know were taken over Lithuania in 1944,¹⁰⁶ could help out with locating camps and estimating their holding capacities.

To conclude: It is certainly not out of the question that a large number of Polish and Western Jews said to have been “gassed”—perhaps even some hundreds of thousands—were interned in Lithuanian camps and ghettos during the years 1942–1944.

3.4. Historians and Witnesses on the Presence of Foreign Jews in Salaspils and Other Latvian Camps

Historian Franziska Jahn has summarized the currently held historiographical picture of the Salaspils camp, located near the Latvian capital Riga, as follows:¹⁰⁷

“Salaspils was the second camp [the first being Jungfernhof] outside of the [Riga] ghetto, to which primarily male ‘Reich Jews’ between the age of 16 and 50 were deported. According to the estimates of survivors there were 1,500 inmates in Salaspils. They constructed the camp and worked at the nearby railway station with sorting the luggage from arriving Jewish transports. From the summer of 1942 Salaspils served as a Polizeihäftlager [police custody camp] for Latvians and Russians.”

In their study *The ‘Final Solution’ in Riga*, originally published in German in 2006, historians Andrej Angrick and Peter Klein devote two chapters to

the Salaspils camp. Here we learn that the camp, assigned to the Regional Commander of the Security Police (*KdS*) Latvia, was constructed starting September 1941 and meant to house Latvian political prisoners as well as Latvian Jews and Jews brought from Germany, Austria and the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. Originally the camp was planned to hold about 25,000 inmates. A POW camp, *Stalag* 350, which held some 40,000 prisoners, was already located nearby.¹⁰⁸ By mid-January 1942 at least 1,000 Jews were working in the camp.¹⁰⁹ On 2 February 1942 a status report from the office of the Territorial Commander of the Security Police and Security Service (*BdS*) Ostland advised that construction was underway at Salaspils on

*“a large camp for about 15,000 inmates, which will be completed around the end of April and is designated at the moment to take in the Jews coming from the Reich. Whereas a part of the camp is to serve immediately as an enlarged police prison, the camp would be completely available as an expanded police prison and correctional camp after the deportation of the Jews, which is expected toward the end of summer.”*¹¹⁰

The work on this camp, however, did not progress as planned. On 2 May 1942, 300 Jews were transferred from the Riga ghetto to Salaspils for cutting peat. By the end of June there were only 675 inmates in the camp, whereof some 400 were German and Austrian Jews. The *KdS* Latvia now had to admit to Berlin that after nine months barracks for only 1,000 inmates had been built, and that barracks for only 500-1,000 more inmates could be added in the near future.¹¹¹

In the autumn of 1942 the German and Austrian Jews were gradually withdrawn from Salaspils. By December there were 1,800 inmates in the camp, most of them Latvians brought in from the Riga Central Prison and elsewhere.¹¹²

As we have already seen above in §3.3.5. (on page 260), the former Higher Leader of the SS and Police of *Reichskommissariat Ostland*, Friedrich Jeckeln, stated during his interrogation on 14 December 1945 that between 55,000 and 87,000 Jews “from Germany, France, Belgium, Holland, Czechoslovakia, and from other occupied countries” had been brought to Salaspils and “exterminated” there in the period from November 1941 to June 1942.

Contemporary Latvian experts, however, estimate the number of Salaspils victims at only some 2,000.¹¹³ This of course does not exclude the deportation of tens of thousands of Western Jews to the camp, providing

that: a) the Jews were not murdered there, and b) that most of the arriving Jews were transferred on to other camps or ghettos. Salaspils would in that case serve as a transit station for Jewish transports, similar to for example the Vaivara camp in Estonia.

Latvian-American historian Andrew Ezergailis unsurprisingly dismisses the notion that other groups of foreign Jews may have been deported to Latvia:¹¹⁴

"It is a Soviet invention that 240,000 Jews were sent to Latvia and murdered there. To begin with, there was not enough housing in war-time Latvia to accommodate, even on a temporary basis, numbers of that scale. The two larger concentration camps, Salaspils and Mezaparks (Kaiserwald), even after being completed, could accommodate only about 6,000 each. And the Riga Ghetto, after the killing of Latvia's Jews, was never again filled up to its original population of 29,000. A makeshift camp was created in Jumpravmuiza [Jungfernhof], but that housed at its peak no more than 4,000."

What Ezergailis fails to consider is the fact that there existed a number of other, smaller camps in Latvia (for example Strasdenhof, Dundaga I and II, Lenta, Spilve, Eleja-Meitene), as well as minor ghettos such as those in Liepaja and Krustpils. According to a brief report which appeared in the February 1945 issue of the Swedish-Jewish *Judisk Krönika* there existed in the summer of 1944 no less than 21 camps in the Riga district alone, housing at least 15,000 Jews "from Western Europe" as well as 3,000 Hungarian Jewesses.¹¹⁵

Ezergailis likewise completely ignores the possibility that such deportees may have been accommodated only for a while in Latvia and later sent elsewhere, for example to workplaces near the Leningrad front. Something like this is in fact hinted at by a brief report which appeared in the February 1943 issue of *Contemporary Jewish Record*:¹¹⁶

"Systematic deportation of all Jews who remained in Latvia, including those brought from Germany, Holland and Belgium was reported Nov. 19 [1942]. The first step in the policy of extermination was taken Nov. 28, 1941, according to the Manchester Guardian (Oct. 30), when the Nazis established an 'inner ghetto' in Riga, and began to use the main ghetto as a transit camp for Jews from Central Europe."

We note here the (from an exterminationist viewpoint) anomalous presence of Dutch and Belgian Jews in Latvia, as well as the claim that Riga served as a transit station for foreign Jews. If the mentioned transfer did indeed take place it cannot have been complete, at least not in the case of the

German (and Austrian) Jews, since it is well documented that there were still thousands of them left in Latvia in summer 1944 (see also §3.3.14. on Page 471 for a report on the presence of Dutch Jews in Latvia in 1944).¹¹⁷ This report, together with that appearing in the 16 October 1942 issue of *Israelitisches Wochenblatt für die Schweiz* (according to which “Jews from Belgium and other western European countries” who arrived in Riga “moved on immediately to other destinations”; §3.1.2. on Page 237) indicates that the Dutch Jews sent to Riga were not shot in the nearby Bikernieki Forest upon their arrival, as claimed by Hilde Sherman-Zander (3.3.2. on Page 255), but transferred to other ghettos or to labor camps.

Considering the abovementioned possibilities, it is definitely not out of the question that a total of some hundreds of thousands of foreign Jews were indeed transported to Latvia in the period of 1941-1944. Ezergailis’s report that there exist no known mass graves containing hundreds of thousands of foreign Jews, or court testimonies or documentation on this hypothetical mass murder,¹¹⁸ needless to say, merely points to the fact that such deportees were not killed *en masse*.

The fact is, that the historiographical knowledge of the Salaspils camp is extremely scant. Even Angrick and Klein have to admit that “the history of the Salaspils camp and its different groups of inmates is almost unknown.”¹¹⁹ Their three Latvian colleagues Karlis Kangeris, Uldis Neiburgs and Rudite Viksne state in an article from 2009 that the administrative records of the Salaspils camp have not been preserved (presumably the documents were destroyed by the Germans at the time of the retreat in autumn 1944), and that the scattered preserved documents (deriving from various German occupation authorities) are not sufficient to reconstruct the history of the camp.¹²⁰

There are indeed some Jewish historians who maintain or at least accept as possible the notion that Western Jews from countries other than the German Reich and the Protectorate were deported to Latvia. Bernhard Press, who himself grew up as a Jew in Riga during the war, writes in his study on the Holocaust in Latvia:¹²¹

“As for the number and origin of other foreign Jews [i.e. other than Jews from Germany, Austria and the Protectorate] who were murdered in Latvia, no official data of any sort exist, and rumors about them are still awaiting confirmation. As has already been indicated, in recent years numerous large and small mass graves have been discovered at various locations in Latvia, but these have yielded no new information because as a rule it was impossible to identify the victims. It must be pointed out here that a leitmotif in the relevant literature is the state-

ment that Jews from France, Belgium, Holland, and even Norway died in Latvia besides those from Germany and the countries of Eastern Europe. Such statements can be found not only in the books of M. Kaufmann and M. Birze and the aforementioned KGB brochures, but even in the personal minutes of the interrogation of F. Jeckeln on December 14 and 16, 1945. [...] It is known that there were also Lithuanian and Polish Jews in the Riga ghetto and the billets [= work camps/commandos in the Riga area...]. Jews from Romania and Yugoslavia were also reportedly exterminated in Latvia. [...] As has been mentioned, F. Jeckeln [...] claimed not to know how many foreign Jews had been brought to Riga. Thus the question of the number and origins of the Jews who were deported to Latvia and murdered there remains largely unanswered. Nor do we have a precise answer to the question of how many of the Latvian Jews in the territory occupied by the Germans survived the war."

That Yugoslavian Jews were brought to Latvia is reportedly confirmed by eyewitness testimony. On 1 January 1943 the weekly exile-German newspaper *Die Zeitung* reported:¹²²

"Now a man who escaped from the Riga Ghetto to neutral foreign soil [likely Sweden] reports that transports of Yugoslavian Jews have arrived in Riga."

In the same news article we read that

"a report appearing in Gardista, the newspaper of Sano Mach, the Slovakian Minister of the Interior, informs that also Croatian Jews are detained in two towns in eastern Poland."

This would imply that the Jews sent to Riga were Serbian Jews. Since the surviving Serbian Jews were most likely deported to Transnistria or the Ukraine (cf. 2.4.5., Page 232), it seems more plausible that they were in fact Jews from "Greater Croatia" (considering that the Yugoslavian state, of which Croatia was part, had existed for more than twenty years prior to the war, confusion on this issue would be understandable). If so, they were part of the 4,972 Croatian Jews deported to Auschwitz in the summer of 1942 (cf. 2.4.4., Page 232).

It should be noted that "eastern Poland" could well refer to the western part of *Generalbezirk Weissruthenien*, which used to belong to Poland. We may also note in passing that, according to Reuben Ainsztein, Yugoslavian Jews were detained in the Janów camp near Lwów (Lviv) in the south-east part of the General Government (now in the Ukraine).¹²³

The presence of Polish Jews in the Riga Kaiserwald camp and its sub-camps is confirmed by one of the leading Latvian Holocaust historians, Margers Vestermanis, who writes:¹²⁴

“The number of prisoners was reduced considerably through Selections, especially in the summer of 1944, as the front drew closer to Riga. Concerning the many Selections only a single, peculiar document has been preserved: an inscription in Russian on the inside of a locker in the subcamp Strasdenhof (Strazdumuiza): ‘I, Abraham Grafman from Warsaw, am now on August 3 among a group of 900 Jews, who are being taken away to be shot.’”

Here we may recall that the witness Jeanette Wolf states in her memoirs that Polish Jews were kept in the Strasdenhof camp, that another witness, Josef Katz, repeatedly mentions the presence of Polish Jews in the Riga Ghetto and the Kaiserwald camp (cf. §3.3.1. Page 244) and that Jack Ratz speaks of the arrival of Polish Jews (who had come “straight from Poland”) at the Lenta camp outside Riga in the summer of 1943. We may also note that the Yad Vashem Central Database of Shoah Victims’ Names¹²⁵ lists an Abraham Grafman from Warsaw (b. 1904), who supposedly perished in 1943—the entry states that he died in Warsaw, but the relative who filled in the form apparently did not know Grafman very well, since the form has the year of birth altered from 1900 to 1904. Could Abraham Grafman have been deported to Latvia via Treblinka?

Vestermanis further writes:¹²⁶

“Regarding Eleja-Meitene [a subcamp of KL Kaiserwald in the Mitau/Jelgava district] the following additional information may be found in the Historical Archives in Riga: The camp, consisting of 16 dilapidated barracks, was located near a ‘Machine and Tractor Station’ in Eleja. The approximately 3,000 Jewish prisoners from Lithuania and Poland were chiefly employed in laying rail tracks and with repairment of tracks. The camp was in use between October 1943 and June 1944. Nothing is known about the subsequent fate of the prisoners.”

How these Polish Jews had reached Latvia, Vestermanis leaves unexplained. According to information furnished by the International Tracing Service in Arolsen the inmates in the Eleja-Meitene camp (said to be located 40-50 km from Mitau) were employed by the firms Rippel, and Berger & Ottlieb.¹²⁷

German historians Helmut Krausnick and Hans-Heinrich Wilhelm mention—without providing a source or any further explanation—that Jews were brought from Holland to the Baltic states.¹²⁸

Historian and former German-Jewish Riga-ghetto inmate Gertrude Schneider has the following to say about Salaspils camp and the child inmates who reportedly became victims of medical experiments conducted there:¹²⁹

“By late summer of 1942, Salaspils had become primarily a camp for Latvian political prisoners and Russian prisoners of war. It also served as a transit center for subsequent Jewish transports on their journey to death in the forest. [...] Postwar examinations of exhumed bodies revealed that various poisons had been tested on the small victims. Tags worn by the children were found in the forest nearby and at Salaspils. They were made out of aluminum and were marked, in many cases, ohne Eltern (without parents), thus identifying the children as orphans. While many of the names on these tags were Jewish, there were quite a number that had to be of Slavic origin, due to the fact that some of the transports had come from Belorussia and from the Theresienstadt Ghetto in Czechoslovakia. Most of the transports came from the Reich, but some had come from as far away as France.”

I will note here in passing that only one transport from Theresienstadt to Riga in the summer of 1942 is documented: it was given the transport designator Bb and departed on 20 August 1942.

Elsewhere Schneider writes:¹³⁰

“While transports of Jews from all over Europe were going to be coming to Riga until late fall of 1942, they would be liquidated immediately, except for small children, who were then housed in one big barrack in Salaspils and used for medical experiments.”

Lotte Strauss recounts a conversation with Schneider in 1999 during which the Holocaust survivor-cum-historian told her that

“during the fall of 1942, 40,000 Jews, mostly from Germany and France, were sent to the woods around Riga. Among them was the ‘22nd Osttransport,’ with 791 Jews from Berlin. They had been packed into regular passenger trains—not into cattle cars as was usual for Jewish transports. It must have given the prisoners a false sense of security and hidden from them that the Nazi authorities intended an especially gruesome end for them: mass execution. Before arriving in the Riga ghetto, the train was diverted to a village named Salaspils. There, at the ramp, the transport was divided: fifty young men were sent to work in a sugar factory in Mitau, and a few more were detailed to help build the concentration camp Kaiserwald. (One, at most two, members of the work details survived.) All the others—more than 700 people—

were taken into the woods to the killing grounds, where mass graves had been dug by Russian POWs."¹³¹

The last known direct transport from the west to Riga was the abovementioned transport from Theresienstadt on 20 August 1942. The 22nd *Osttransport* is stated to have departed from Berlin on 26 October 1942 (the number of deportees is alternatively given as 801 or 808).¹³² In preserved German documents no destination is listed for this transport.¹³³ The next *Osttransport* from Berlin, with 1,021 deportees, departed for Auschwitz on 24 November 1942. If we take a look at the succeeding Berlin transports things get even more curious. Raul Hilberg notes that

"the transport of November 29, 1942, with 1,001 Jews, is listed as destined either for Auschwitz or Riga, and the transport of December 14, 1942, with 811 deportees is allocated to Riga. The prosecutor could not find survivors of either transport, and proof of their arrival in Riga is lacking. It is likely that both were directed to Auschwitz ([...])"¹³⁴

The court document which Hilberg refers to¹³⁵—which the author has not had the opportunity to access—apparently refers to other transport lists than those kept at NARA, because the latter lists three *Osttransporte* from Berlin departing in November and December 1942: One transport on 20 November with 1,021 deportees, a second on 14 December with 813 deportees and a third on 15 December with 1,061 deportees. For none of these transports is a destination listed. Danuta Czech in her *Kalendarium* lists no transports from Berlin as having arrived in Auschwitz during December or the last days of November; the next listed arrival from Berlin, with 1,000 deportees (no documentary source is stated for this entry), is on 13 January 1943¹³⁶—this is most likely identical with the *Osttransport* listed in the NARA transport lists as departing Berlin on January 12 (here the number of deportees is given as 1,190).

Here we may ask in passing whether being sent to Salaspils more or less meant certain death for Jewish prisoners, as implied by many exterminationist historians. Jack Ratz, who was briefly sent to Salaspils after the liquidation of the labor camp Lenta in 1944, states that the camp commandant of Lenta, the SS man Fritz Scherwitz—who in secret was a Jew who had been adopted by a German soldier during World War I and for that reason took care to treat the Jewish inmates well—"had been ordered to send all the Jews to Germany" at the time of the liquidation but instead sent the Jews in the Lenta camp to Salaspils: "He felt that we had a chance to survive at Salaspils, although it was a notorious death camp."¹³⁷ The contradiction is dumbfounding. Obviously Scherwitz knew that Salaspils was not a very dangerous place, and definitely not a "death camp"

As for Friedrich Jeckeln's claim that French and Dutch Jews had arrived in Salaspils we find a glimpse of a possible confirmation of it in an article which the Soviet journalist B. Brodovsky wrote after having visited a childrens' home in the Riga suburb of Bolduri (or Bulduri) some time in late 1944:¹³⁸

"Living at the home at the present time are boys and girls who were rescued from Salaspils, a German death factory near Riga. Although there are more than 400 children in the home, a death-like silence reigns in the rooms, for the children are still under the terrifying impression of their recent ordeals. [...]

In Salaspils there were special barracks for children with cots in four tiers. However, there were so many children that some of them had to sleep on the floor. The toilets were in the courtyard, but the children were expected to observe the same regulations regarding their use as the adults. Living in the same barracks were Alexei, Lenya, Valya and Kilya Kondratenko. Kilya, the youngest, was only a year and eight months. [...]

The Germans had a reason for organizing children's barracks in Salaspils. They needed a factory for the extraction of blood and the children were good raw material. The camp administration had an agreement with the German Red Cross to supply them with blood, and they did, by the bucketful, which was sent in ampules to the hospitals every day. This was an establishment of which the fascist vampires might well be proud; two hundred liters of children's blood a day.

We talked to young victims from Leningrad, Vitebsk, Poltava and Amsterdam. We even saw two little girls from Paris. From these children we learned of the inhuman practices of this factory."

The journalist then goes on to describe how he was shown "the findings of medical investigations of children in the Bolduri childrens' home and also quotes briefly from the files on five of the children, all of them apparently evacuees from Belarus: Natasha Panfilova (12 yrs), Pavel Levchenko (12 yrs), Grigori Senkevich (7 yrs), Dmitri Sakson (8 yrs) and Anya Karamish (1 yrs 7 months).¹³⁹ It is unfortunate that Brodovsky does not mention the name of any of the Dutch or French children, but his account indicates that their names and other personal data were recorded by Soviet investigators, and that they thus may still be retrievable from archived documents.

No documentary evidence confirming the allegation that child prisoners served as involuntary blood donors has ever been found, and the claims presented in the Soviet press that 7,000 children perished at Salaspils are

viewed as absurd by contemporary Latvian historians.¹⁴⁰ This of course does not preclude that child inmates liberated from the camp were placed in Bolduri and examined by Soviet physicians.

In 1963 a book on Salaspils entitled *Salaspils naves no metne* (*Death Camp Salaspils*) was published in Riga; the following year a Russian translation appeared.¹⁴¹ This book contains a number of eyewitness accounts, most of which relate either to a nearby POW camp (“*Stalag 350*”) rather than the Salaspils work reeducation camp (*AEL, Arbeitserziehungslager*), or to the final stage of the camp’s existence, when it was used to detain Latvian political prisoners, “work-shy s” and evacuees from Belarus. There are, however, two witness statements found in it that confirm the presence of Western and Polish Jews in Salaspils. Stanislav Rozanov, a Russian POW who worked in a sawmill near the camp, states that Jewish convoys “from Germany, Poland, Austria, France, Belgium, Romania, Holland and other countries” were sent there.¹⁴² Karlis Sausnitis, a Latvian journalist and political prisoner who arrived in Salaspils on 7 May 1942, repeatedly states that among the camp inmates there were Jews from “Czechoslovakia, Poland, Austria and other occupied countries.”¹⁴³ As already mentioned, mainstream historians maintain that the Jewish inmates of Salaspils consisted of only Latvian, German, Austrian and some Czech Jews. As seen we have information confirming that an unknown number of Polish Jews were present in five Latvian camps: Kaiserwald (Mezaparks), Lenta, Strasdenhof (Strazdumuiza), Eleja-Meitene and Salaspils.

3.5. Further Witnesses Provided by Christian Gerlach

In his 1999 book *Kalkulierte Morde* (*Calculated Murder*) German Holocaust historian Christian Gerlach references several witnesses attesting to deportations of French and Dutch Jews to Belarus:¹⁴⁴

“That Jews were brought to Belarus not only from the Great German Reich and the Protectorate of Bohemia-Moravia, but also from other countries has until now [1999] been almost overlooked. Only some of the transports in question can be traced in detail, and often we know of them only from isolated witness statements, which means that they cannot be confirmed with certainty. Thus after the war, witnesses of a certain authority, for example the former Gebietskommissar of Borissov, [Karl] Bauer; Karl Buchner, a member of KdS Minsk Abteilung IVb specially responsible for gas vans; a surviving German Jew [identified only as “W.M.”], and a member of the Arbeitsamt Minsk [“H.H.”], stat-

ed that French Jews had arrived in Minsk. [...] The situation is similar when it comes to possible deportations of Dutch Jews, who are said to have worked in, among other places, the weapons workshop in Minsk."

As for the Dutch Jews, we learn in a footnote that their presence in Minsk was witnessed not only by the already discussed witness Inge Stolten (§3.3.17., Page 477), but also by "H.M.," who worked as a supervisor in the workshop in question; "A.M.," a member of the *KdS* (*Kommandeur der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD*) Minsk and the aforementioned "H.H." of the *Arbeitsamt* Minsk.¹⁴⁵ In another footnote we read that Anna Krasnoperko, a former inmate of the Minsk Ghetto, told Gerlach in October 1993 that there had arrived French as well as Dutch Jews at Minsk.¹⁴⁶

The reason why the transports of French and Dutch Jews to Belarus have hitherto been "overlooked" by the Holocaust historians is of course that they do not fit with the official historiography on the deportations of these groups of Jews. Christian Gerlach, however, is unaware—or pretends to be unaware—of the implications of the testimonies he refers to, and he completely refrains from discussing them in a broader context.

Gerlach further writes that it is a commonly held notion in Belarus that Jews from France and other Western European countries were sent to Minsk.¹⁴⁷ Indeed, his Belarusian colleague Marat Botvinnik writes, unfortunately without providing a source, that:¹⁴⁸

"Since the first transport [to Minsk from abroad] arrived from Hamburg, all the prisoners of the Sonderghetto [also called the "Hamburg Ghetto"] were usually called 'Hamburg Jews', even though they came from different cities of Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia, as well as Belgium and Holland. Each transport consisted of up to 1,000 people. The Sonderghetto held up to 24,000 Jews."

We note here that the number of Jews held in the Minsk *Sonderghetto* according to Botvinnik does not fit the notion, embraced by Western Holocaust historians, that the only Western Jews to actually reach the ghetto were the 7-8,000 Reich Jews from the initial transports in November 1941 (cf. §3.3.10).

3.6. Testimonies Concerning Postcards and Letters from Deported Jews

Next-to-last in this survey of testimonial evidence I will discuss the letters and postcards sent to the Warsaw Ghetto in the latter half of 1942 from Jews who had been deported to the east. Since, to the knowledge of the

author, none of those have been preserved (perhaps due to the recipients being themselves deported east later on), I will address this issue here and not below in the survey of documentary evidence.

In an article titled “The Jews of Warsaw Are Murdered in Treblinka,” published in the 20 September 1942 issue of the clandestine Bund organ *Oyf der rakh* (*On Guard*), we find the following passage:¹⁴⁹

“During the first weeks of the ‘Evacuation Aktion,’ [i.e. in late July and early August 1942] Warsaw was swamped by postcards written by Jews deported from the city. Greetings supposedly arrived from Bialystok, Brześć [Brest-Litowsk], Kosów, Malkinia, Pińsk, Smolensk. It was all a lie! All the trains with Jews from Warsaw went to Treblinka, where the Jews were exterminated in a horrifying way. The letters and the postcards come from people who managed to escape from the [train] cars or the camp itself. It is also possible that a few Jews included in the first deportations [...] were intentionally sent to Brześć or to Pińsk so that their postcards would deceive, mislead, and create false illusions in the Warsaw Jewish community.”

It is worth noting here that Warsaw Jewess Mary Berg in her diary entry from 22 July 1942, the very first day of the great evacuation, wrote that “The transports are being sent in the direction of Brzesc”¹⁵⁰—a possible indication that some Jews in the ghetto, perhaps members of the Jewish Council, had more detailed information on the final destination of the transports. According to the witness Rachel Gurmanova, who rehashes the “decoy transport” story, five or six postcards arrived from Brest-Litovsk carrying the message “we are working.”¹⁵¹

A report written by the underground later in the autumn of 1942 came up with an alternative explanation for the letters:¹⁵²

“Mysterious letters written by the deportees and dispatched from the vicinity of Bialystok, Pińsk, Brześć on the Bug River cropped up [in the ghetto]. They were supposedly brought to the ghetto by policemen and railroad workers. As later became clear, these were either poor forgeries or letters that were indeed written by the ‘evacuees’ as dictated by the Germans at the site of [their] death in Treblinka.”

How exactly it “became clear” that the letters were “poor forgeries” or dictated at Treblinka was never revealed by any of the underground spokesmen.

Further, in an appeal from January 1943 issued by the Jewish resistance organization in Warsaw we read:¹⁵³

"In the course of the last weeks, people of certain circles were spreading news about letters, which supposedly came from Jews who were evacuated from Warsaw and who are now supposed to be in labor camps at Pinsk or Bobruisk."

According to the Jewish resistance member Yitzhak Zuckerman, letters which were part of "a German ruse," arrived in Warsaw "from the towns of Bessarabia, Smolensk and Minsk saying that the migrants had arrived safely and were satisfied."¹⁵⁴

Needless to say these letters, if genuine, would pose an embarrassing problem to the Holocaust historians, who therefore have to dismiss them by making various unsubstantiated claims. Israeli historian Yisrael Gutman writes:¹⁵⁵

"We have no evidence to the effect that the transports were deliberately sent to a place that would abet the deception of Warsaw's Jews. It is likewise doubtful that the Germans had to bother with any such special circuitous action, since it was much simpler to compel the deportees to copy down dictated letters immediately upon their arrival at Treblinka. This system was used at a number of camps. In fact, it was a customary tactic of deception employed throughout the course of the 'Final Solution.' But it is also true that many escaped from the trains on the way to Treblinka. Youth movement members, for example, repeatedly escaped from the freight cars and returned to the ghetto. Thus it is highly probable that there were escapees who did not return to the ghetto and that they too wrote letters but deliberately failed to state that they had escaped from the train on the way to Treblinka and were living someplace illegally. It is logical that such letters would be deliberately vague, just as there were good reasons why they might be misunderstood or the true location of the sender might easily be misinterpreted. Yet in many cases the tales of greetings and letters were no more than hearsay, and the more one tried to track down the person who had actually seen the letter with his own eyes, or had received the letter himself, the clearer it became that the so-called source had only heard about such a letter from someone else, who had in turn heard about it. The true source of the rumors was evidently the Germans and their Jewish agents, though we can also presume that in a community starved for hope and trying to block out the horrible truth, rumors of this kind come into being even without an instigator at work."

In order to support the claim that the existing letters were forgeries, Gutman then goes on to quote a dismissing note written by Warsaw Jew and “underground archivist” Emanuel Ringelblum (1900-1944):¹⁵⁶

“A legend began to grow up about letters from the deportees, particularly from certain places—Brześć, Kowel [in north-western Ukraine], Pińsk, etc. Hard as you might try, you could never get anyone who had actually read a letter with his own eyes. It was always a third person who had heard from someone else that so-and-so had read the letter. These letters were always phrased in exactly the same way and appeared in the same form: a few words scrawled on a chit torn from a paper bag saying that we arrived safely to wherever. A letter like this never contained details about the living conditions of the deportees or how they occupied their time. But they always requested money and belongings and always mentioned that other deportees had asked to pass on their regards—and these others always happened to be wealthy people.

Such letters were always delivered by Polish Christians who ‘managed to reach [the proper address] after overcoming various difficulties.’ The amicable Poles were willing to take money and clothing back for the deportees. They were also prepared to aid in the search for others who had been deported—naturally, in return for the payment of hundreds or thousands of zlotys.”

Gutman’s assertions are rather contrived, and some of Ringelblum’s statements are demonstrably false. To begin with, the hypothesis that some of the cards came from evacuees who had escaped from the train on their way to Treblinka could perhaps explain the letters reportedly arriving from Małkinia (which is located approximately 10 km north of Treblinka) and Kosow, but hardly those sent from Belarus and the Ukraine.

Ringelblum’s claim that the letters actually received were always delivered by Polish swindlers is incorrect, as shown by a diary entry from 4 August 1942 written by a certain Abraham Lewin:¹⁵⁷

“A letter from Baranowicze [in western Belarus]. The writer is working as a farm-laborer. She asks for underwear. Living is cheap, 7 zloty for white bread, 1.80 for potatoes. It would be good if she could be sent underwear. The letter came by post.”

Since the letter was delivered by mail, it must necessarily have been stamped by the local post office which first handled it, thus confirming its point of origin. We may also compare with the autumn 1942 underground report’s statement that the letters were “dispatched” from locations in the

east. This is obviously the reason why the *Oyf der rakh* writer had to come up with far-fetched idea that the Germans were sending some of the transports to the east just as part of a deception.

The reported contents of this letter further contradict Ringelblum's assertion that the messages "never contained details about the living conditions of the deportees or how they occupied their time." Also, if the letter had been a part of a swindle, how come the writer only asked for underwear, and moreover stressed that prices at the new place of residence were cheap—something which hardly would encourage the sending of large sums of money?

That Polish Jews were deported to Baranovichi is confirmed by a news notice which appeared in the *Aufbau* issue of 26 June 1942:¹⁵⁸

"There have been mass roundups of Jews in all of Poland in order to 'recruit' forced labor. In the district of Baranowicze Jews are working on draining the Pinsk swamps. New labor camps are constantly established."

The hypothesis that the letters were written under duress by deportees who had just arrived in the "death camp" lacks, as far as this author has been able to determine, any basis in the testimonies left by former inmates and camp personnel from Treblinka.

Ringelblum's claim that the existence of the letters was, if not wholly, then for the most part, a "legend" is contradicted by the *Oyf der rakh* writer's statement that Warsaw was "swamped" by such postcards. That the letters delivered were indeed rather numerous is hinted by the already mentioned statement of Rachel Gurmanova, as well as the testimony of a certain Tokar-Warszawski according to which "three postcards that arrived from people who had been deported were passed around in the Többens' [workshop in Warsaw]."¹⁵⁹

A further diary note of Lewin's from 30 July 1942 implies that some of the Jews deported from Warsaw were sent on from Treblinka to the Białystok district (similar to how some of the Jews sent to Sobibór were transferred on arrival to labor camps in the Lublin district; cf. §2.5. Page 234):¹⁶⁰

"A letter from Białystok that a Polish policeman brought, from a woman to her husband. She and her son are together with several other families and have to work in the fields, but they are receiving food."

3.7. Entries of Interest from the Yad Vashem Central Database of Shoah Victims

The already mentioned Yad Vashem Central Database of Shoah Victims, the majority of whose records are based on forms submitted by relatives of the reportedly deceased, contains a relatively large number of entries that are clearly anomalous from an exterminationist point of view, but which fit well with the revisionist transit-camp hypothesis. Needless to say these entries do not have the evidential value of documents and, generally speaking, not even that of ordinary testimonial evidence. Nonetheless I will present them here as they may provide valuable hints as to the destinations of the transports departing from the “extermination camps.”

3.7.1. Polish Jews

The 62 entries summarized in the table on the next page concern Jews who were apparently deported from Poland to the German-occupied Baltic states. For obvious reasons I have omitted entries concerning Jews originating from the provinces of pre-WWII Poland that were incorporated into Lithuania and Belarus during the war.

The Jews listed in the table above resided in towns and cities all over Poland. If the information in the entries is correct, this would imply that transports went to the Baltic states from more than one of the “extermination camps.” The many entries relating to Warthegau Jews (Łódź, Słupca, Lututów, Ozorków, Leczyca [Lentschütz]) point to transports from Chełmno. As seen above (3.3.1. Page 244 and 3.3.19. Page 477) the witnesses Kruk and Tory confirm that Jews were deported from Łódź to Lithuania (and transferred from there to Latvia). Sosnowiec, Tarnowskie Góry, Zambrow¹⁶¹ and Będzin point to Auschwitz, whereas Warsaw, Rembertów, Siedliszcze indicate transports from Treblinka. Lwów, Kolomea, Mysłenice and Przemyśl¹⁶² clearly point to Bełżec.

The entry for Berl Zoler, which is based on information submitted by his own daughter, is especially noteworthy. The vast majority of the Jews of Kolomea (Kolomyia) were deported to Bełżec on 3-4 April, 7 September and 11 October 1942.¹⁶³ From an exterminationist viewpoint it is simply unthinkable that this 72-year-old Jew for some reason would have been spared from certain death and transported to Latvia. Another remarkable entry is that of the Łódź Jew Hugo Friedman, born 1875, who is reported to have perished in Riga.

Surname	Given name	Year of birth	Wartime residence	Place of death	Year of death
Aurbach	Chaim	1920	Sosnowiec	Riga	?
Baver	Aron	1903	Siedliszcze	Butrimants (Lith.)	?
Bimholc	Dawid	1905	Łódź	Estonia	1944
Blumberg	Liber	1918	Warsaw	Siauliai (Lith.)	?
Brafman	Chilek	1916	Lublin	Riga	1943
Brener	Aba	1926	Grodziec	Riga	1943
Brener	Falek	1912	Grodziec	Riga	1944
Danhersch	Yakob	3/9 1917	Przemysl	Estonia	1942
Davidovitz	Avraham	1923	Ozorkov (Leczyca Distr.)	Latvia	1944
Distelheim	Etti	?	Kosow Pekucki	Korsovka (Latvia)	1942
Drakhman	Hersh	1918	Slupca	Latvia	1943
Elterman	Josiph	1886	Warsaw	Subate (Latvia)	1942
Fajntuch	Hala	1920	Warsaw	Lithuania	1942
Flambaum	Eliy	1897	Siedliszcze	Sabila (Latvia)	1942
Friedman	Hugo	1875	Łódź	Riga	1943
Glikman	Mechel	1905	Łódź Lubelski	Sabila (Latvia)	1942
Goldberg	Mojseze	1916	Łódź	Riga	1943
Grimatlich	Mordechai	1898	Lubomierz	Riga	1942
Grosser	Chaja	1886	Tomaszow Lubelski	Mariampol (Lith.)	?
Gurewitz	Rakhel	?	Zambrow	Serene (Latvia)	Aged 3
Horowitz	Hirs	1907	Warsaw	Klooga (Estonia)	?
Jelen	Ester	1916	Rembertow	Latvia	1943
Kam	Aharon	1931	Lucia (Kokomea Distr.)	Lithuania	1942
Kaplan	Pesakh	?	Pobianic (Lask Distr.)	Kelmai (Lith.)	Aged 60
Kaufman	Bumek	1916	Lwów	Kovno	1942/43
Keller	Leiser	?	Lwów	Estonia	?
Kerber	Brontza	?	Gombin	Kovno	?
Kerber	Zalman	1884	Gombin	Kovno	1943
Kretz	Mina	1898	Lwów	Merts (Lith.)	1942
Klaczkin	Chaja	1921	Łódź	Latvia	1943
Klaczko	Janina	1909	Warsaw	Riga	?
Knaperbaum	Yaakov	1916	Łódź	Lithuania	1943
Korek	Dov	1878	Slupca	Lithuania	1942
Leibler	Necha	1880	Myslenice (Krakow Distr.)	Balwa (Latvia)	1942?
Lejzerowicz	Yaakov	?	Lututow	Libau (Latvia)	1942
Lejzerowicz	Moshe	?	Lututow	Libau (Latvia)	1942
Lewin	Josef	?	Kalisz	Warna (Lith.)	Aged 45
Lichter	Tenika	1908	Lotwa	Riga	1943
Milgrom	Miriam	1900	Miedzyczyc	Lithuania	1942
Minc	Rudolf	1888	Warsaw	Lithuania	?
Model	Michel	1914	Warsaw	Riga	1942
Moncas	Yosef	1890	Pultusk	Lithuania	1944
Moncas	Rachel	1921	Pultusk	Lithuania	1944
Nudel	Tzvi	1885	Zamosc	Kovno	?
Rafalowitz	Dawid	?	Dubienka	Daugavpils (Latvia)	Aged 40
Reif	Abraham	?	Krasnobrod	Tallinn (Estonia)	?
Rozenbach	Wolf	1911	Boryslaw	Latvia	1943
Rozenberg	Israel	1918	Leczyca	Lithuania	1942
Rutenberg	?	?	Leczyca	Liepaja (Latvia)	1942
Schonfeld	Hedwig	1899	Kolna (Lomza Distr.)	Riga	?
Semenski	Zvi	1924	Ozorków	Malta (Latvia)	1942
Shpiter	Yenta	1914	Prochnik	Valka (Latvia)	1942
Sondhov	Richard	13/11 1928	Będzin	Lagedi (Estonia)	?
Spindler	Leibush	1877	Tamow	Krakas (Lith.)	?
Sungolovski	Heshel	1906	Tamowskie Gory	Riga	1946(?)
Szer	Gerszon	1900	Zilkowka	Sabila (Latvia)	1942
Sztorch	Szmuel	1910	Slupca (Konin Distr.)	Riga	1942
Tenenbaum	Moshe	1890	Krakow	Kovno	?
Tufman	Khaim	1920	Łódź	Lithuania	1943
Wagon	Freida	1917	Rejowiec	Lithuania	1942
Warum	Doba	1886	Warsaw	Svedasai (Lith.)	?
Zoter	Berl	1870	Kolomea	Livani (Latvia)	1942

Another group of Jews deported to Bełżec appears to have ended up near the frontline in eastern Ukraine and Russia. In the June 1942 issue of the *Contemporary Jewish Record* we read:¹⁶⁴

“Meanwhile, all skilled and unskilled Jews in Ciechanow were reported April 15 [1942] to have been sent to labor camps, while thousands of former Lublin and Krakow Jews were said to have spent Passover digging trenches on the Taganrog-Kharkov sector of the Soviet front.”

According to Yitzhak Arad, a total of 30,000 Lublin Jews were deported to Bełżec between 17 March and 14 April 1942, while a first group of 5,000 Krakow Jews were sent there in early June the same year.¹⁶⁵ Passover (*Pe-sach*) fell on 2 April in 1942.¹⁶⁶ How then could Krakow Jews have reached the Ukraine (no “gassings” of Kraków Jews had yet taken place in any other “extermination camp”)? One possibility is that Arad is mistaken and that smaller transports of Krakow Jews to Bełżec actually took place during the period in question. A more likely explanation, though, is that Krakow Jews were among the Lublin Jews deported to the camp. More than 5,000 Krakow Jews were resettled to the Lublin district during the autumn of 1940.¹⁶⁷

All of the Baltic camps and towns mentioned in the entries are identifiable. To begin with the Latvian locations, Livani, where the elderly Berl Zoler reportedly died, is on the banks of the Daugava River some 30 km south-east of Jekabpils and 80 km north-north-west of Daugavpils (Dvinsk). Sabila, which is stated as the place of death in three entries concerning unrelated individuals from different towns, is most likely identical with Sabile, a town or village located about 35 km north-west of Tukums. Serene or Jaunjelgava is a town on the Daugava River in the Zemgale district, located about halfway between Riga and Jekabpils. Subate is a town or village located some 40 km north-west of Daugavpils, directly on the Latvian-Lithuanian border. Malta is the name of a village (and a nearby river) located approximately 25 km north-west of Rezekne, a town in eastern Latvia. Valka (Walk) is a town located directly on the Latvian-Estonian border, some 110 km inland. Korsovka is the Russian name for Karsava, a town located northeast of Rezekne, near the Russian border. Balwa (Balvi), finally, is a town in the north-eastern corner of Latvia, some 30 km from the Russian border. As for the Lithuanian locations, Merts is another name for Merkinė in Alytus County in southern Lithuania. Svedasai is located halfway along the road between Utena and Kupiškis. Kelmai or Kelme is located on the road between Siauliai and Taurage (Tauroggen). Warna is

another name for Varena in Alytaus county. Krakes, finally, is a small town in the Kedainiai district in central Lithuania.

The fact that the individuals who submitted the forms in question knew the names of these rather obscure locations in Latvia suggest that they themselves or their relatives had received communications of some kind or other mentioning the whereabouts of the deported person.

About the Łódź Jew Mojsze Goldberg, his cousin informs us that he was “Sent to Riga for slave labor. When we were standing in line for breakfast rations the Nazis made a ‘selection’ of 100 men. Mojsze, number 67, was forced to dig his own grave.”

3.7.2. French Jews

Next, I present a table of 8 similar entries relating to Jews deported from France:

Last name	First name	Born	Wartime residence	Place of death	Died
Bloch	Edmund	1900	Saverne	Jassy (Iasi)	1944
Cealac	Yakob	1911	France	Riga	?
Cohen	Israel	1890	France	Belarus	?
Falesski	Haim	1890	Paris	Transnistria	1942
Mai	Ludwig	1881	Paris	Riga	1944
Perelman	Mina	1893	Paris	Riga	?
Rozenberg	Maksimilian	1912	Brumath	Bershad (Transn.)	?
Schauman	Khaim	?	Nice	Transnistria	Aged 18 or 19

“Haim Falesski” is identifiable as Haim Faletsky, born in Calarasi, Romania, on 11 September 1890. He was on Convoy 20, which departed from Drancy with destination Auschwitz on 17 August 1942. It consisted of 1,000 deportees, whereof 878 were “gassed on arrival,” *i.e.* transited.¹⁶⁸

There is only one “Israel Cohen” in the transport lists (in Convoy 33), but he is stated to be born in Philipopoli, Bulgaria, in 1902, not in Berguent, Morocco in 1890 as the Israel Cohen found in the Yad Vashem database. There are two Cohens in the transit lists with the name “Isidore,” which is given as Israel Cohen’s second name: one born 18 October 1887 in Constantinople, the other born 5 July 1894 in Paris. The former was on Convoy 66, which departed from Drancy bound for Auschwitz on 20 January 1944, the latter was on Convoy 23, which departed from Drancy with the same destination on 24 August 1942. If one of these two individuals is

identical with "Israel Cohen," it is more likely the "Isidore Cohen" born in Paris in 1894, since it seems improbable that Jews would have been transported to Belarus as late as January or February 1944.

The persons in the six other records are not to be found in the extant transport lists. This, however, does not necessarily mean that these individuals were not deported from France. It is possible that they went under other names at the time of their deportations, that their surnames were misspelled in the transport lists, or that they were last-minute additions to convoys and therefore do not appear in the extant copies of the transport lists. Such additions can be inferred from the fact that the numbers of deportees in the convoy lists in some cases differ slightly from the corresponding figures given in the telegrams sent to Auschwitz by the Jewish section of the French Gestapo. As Serge Klarsfeld explains,

*"it was always possible for them [the Gestapo] to add on a few more people at the last minute putting the correct number in the telex without transferring these names to the two lists entrusted to the head of the convoy."*¹⁶⁹

The four entries stating Transnistria as the place of death are especially noteworthy in context of the news report from November 1942 according to which thousands of Jews deported from France had arrived in Bessarabia and the ghettos of Calarasi (Kalarash) and Kishinev (Cf. §3.1.2. Page 237). Moreover, the bi-monthly news review *Contemporary Jewish Record* wrote in its issue of December 1942:¹⁷⁰

"In occupied France, deportations proceeded swiftly and ruthlessly. Within three months after the initial arrests, about 35,000 Jewish families were broken up. In Paris, 4,000 Rumanian Jews were arrested on Sept. 24 and taken to the Drancy internment camp, the Rumanian Government having enacted a special law under which they could be apprehended. One of the Paris deportees, who managed to survive a nightmarish journey to Bessarabia, told a horrible story (Oct. 15) of his arrest and of his trip in a sealed car marked 'War materials, explosives – transit to Russia.' Those who met the transport at its destination saw a ghastly sight. More than half of the occupants in some cars were dead, and their bodies, already in a state of decomposition, fell out as the doors were opened."

This remarkable report implies that the Jews of Romanian nationality deported from France were sent to the Romanian-annexed Bessarabia, from which in turn all or some of them may have been transferred across the

Bug to the “Transnistrian Reservation.” Indeed, some pages on in the same issue we read:¹⁷¹

“Sealed cattle cars, containing Jews deported from France, arrived in Rumania, it was reported in Lisbon, Oct. 15, and those not dead from starvation or exhaustion were immediately shipped to Transnistria.”

Needless to say the Western Jews deported to Transnistria may not have stayed there permanently; it would not take much effort to transport them across the Bug River and into *Reichskommissariat* Ukraine. In this context we may note that the *Jewish Telegraph Agency* reported the following on 23 July 1943:¹⁷²

“At present, the Jewish population of Mohilev [in Transnistria] is about 15,000, of whom 3,000 are natives of the city and the others deportees from Rumania, Germany and Bulgaria. These figures vary from day to day, one report points out, since new groups of deportees are constantly arriving and others are sent farther eastward to construct fortifications on the Russian front under the supervision of Nazi officers.”

Also, on 2 January 1944 the Swedish newspaper *Dagens Nyheter* reported that an estimated 55,000 Jews in Romanian camps had been sent to work on the Russian front; of these about 50% had perished due to lack of food, clothing and medical care.¹⁷³

As mentioned in §2.4.3. on Page 231, Jews from the Bulgaria-annexed regions of Macedonia and Thrace were deported to Treblinka and Sobibór in March and April 1943. According to mainstream historiography the only Jews ever deported to Transnistria were from Bessarabia, Bukovina and “Old Romania.” Was Transnistria from that time on used as a sort of transit area for Western and Balkan Jews within the framework of the *Generalplan Ost*, similar to the Lublin “reservation”?

Bershad, where “Maksimilian Rozenberg” is reported to have perished, was the location of a Jewish ghetto which was part of the “Transnistrian Reservation.”¹⁷⁴ About this “reservation” we read in the 6 November 1942 issue of the weekly *Aufbau*:¹⁷⁵

“The province of Transnistria will soon become a single large collection reservoir [Sammelbecken] for Jews. Freight trains from France, Holland and Belgium constantly arrive, bringing half-starved and sick deportees who are then left there to their fate.”

On 24 September 1942, a total of 1,594 Romanian Jews were arrested in the Paris region and detained at the Drancy collection camp. On the following day 729 of them were deported to Auschwitz on Convoy 37, which consisted of in all 1,004 deportees. At Kosel, some 100 km west of

Auschwitz, 175 men from the convoy were selected for work. The transport is reported to have arrived at Auschwitz on 27 September. Upon arrival, another 40 men were selected for work, whereas the rest of the deportees were immediately “gassed.” On 28 September 1942 Convoy 38 departed with 856 Jews on board; 594 of them were of Romanian nationality. Of the Jews from this transport some 685 were “gassed” on arrival at Auschwitz on 29 September.¹⁷⁶

The abovementioned Haim Faletsky was the only Romanian Jew on Convoy 20, which as already mentioned departed on 17 August, and was, as far as the author of this article has been able to determine from the transport lists, the very first Romanian Jew to be deported from France. The reason for this is mentioned in the above quoted news article and explained more fully by Serge Klarsfeld:¹⁷⁷

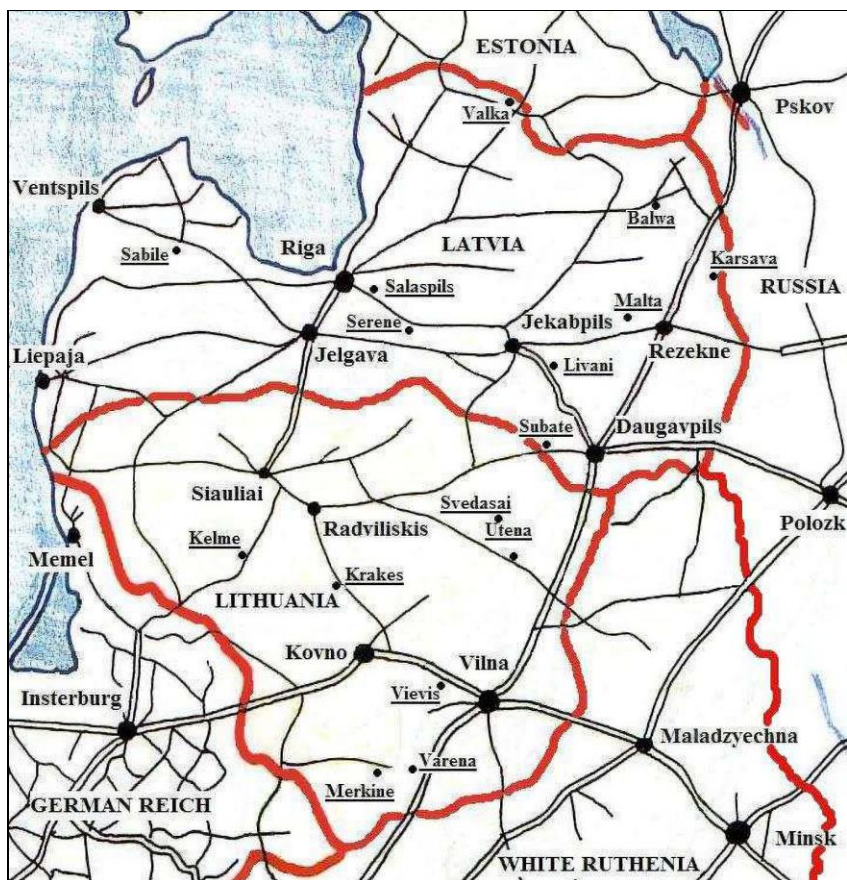
“Romania was allied with Germany, but under the pressure of Gustav Richter, Eichmann’s representative in Bucharest, the Romanian Jews living in France lost the protection of their government. On September 17, the German embassy had told the Gestapo that Romania and Bulgaria were no longer interested in their Jews. They thus became deportable [...]. The next day, the Gestapo informed the RSHA in Berlin that the deportation of Romanian Jews would not exceed 3,000 persons.”

In the end a total of 2,958 Romanian Jews were deported from France.¹⁷⁸ That Faletsky was deported already in August could be explained either as a mistake or (perhaps more likely) that for some reason he was not recognized as a citizen by the Romanian embassy. Of the three other Jews listed as having died in Transnistria all were reportedly born in France. I will return to the deportation of French Jews to Transnistria later in this study.

3.7.3. Dutch Jews

There are five entries of interest relating to Dutch Jews:

Last name	First name	Born	Wartime residence	Place of death	Died
Bromet	Helena	1912	Amsterdam	Riga	?
Cohen	Ester	1871	Veendam	Riga	1942
Goldschmidt	Max	1870	Netherlands	Lithuania	?
Linderman	Nico	1910	Amsterdam	Utyany (Lith.)	1944
Magnus	Regina	1892	Amsterdam	Lithuania	1943



*Illustration 3. Latvian and Lithuanian locations (underlined) appearing in the anomalous Yad Vashem database entries (also included are Vievis and Salaspils). Based on the railway map of Eastern Europe in A. Knipping, R. Schulz, *Reichsbahn hinter der Ostfront*.*

An online database¹⁷⁹ based on the Dutch transport lists a Helena Bromet-Root, born 3 October 1912 in Amsterdam, as murdered in Auschwitz on 23 July 1942. There is also an Esther Cohen-Zion, born 26 June 1871 in Eibergen, listed as murdered in Auschwitz on 17 September 1942. We may recall here Hilde Sherman-Zander's testimony (3.3.2., Page 255) according to which one or more convoys of Dutch Jews arrived in Riga in the summer of 1942.

A Max Goldschmidt, born 6 December 1873 in Singhofen, is listed as murdered in Sobibór on 23 July 1943. A Regina Magnus-Kirsch, born 24 August 1892 in Berlin is listed as murdered in Sobibór on 26 March 1943, yet two entries in the Yad Vashem Database, submitted by her brother

(James Isaac Kirsch) state (while adding a question mark) that she was deported to Lithuania.

There is no Nico or Nicolaus Henny Lindeman, stated to be born in Hengelo, the Netherlands, to be found in the database, but if one searches for victims from this town one finds a David Herman Lindeman (b. 27 March 1903) and a Dina Lindeman (b. 8 December 1867), both from Hengelo and allegedly gassed in Sobibór, David on 11 June 1943 and Dina on 13 March 1943. Was “Nico” a relative of theirs? The Yad Vashem entry is based on information submitted by his brother, Mordekhai. Utyany, the place where “Nico Lindeman” reportedly perished, is undoubtedly the same as Utena¹⁸⁰, a city in north-eastern Lithuania. Avraham Tory wrote that German bombardment during the first weeks of Operation Barbarossa had “destroyed the road between Vilkomir and Utena.”¹⁸¹ Were Dutch Jews sent to carry out road work at this location? One may recall here Herman Kruk’s April 1943 diary entries (3.3.1., Page 244) according to which a large number of Dutch Jews were deported to Lithuania, most of them apparently via Sobibór.

It may well be that the first transports of Dutch Jews to Lithuania took place already in the summer of 1942, around the same time that one or more convoys arrived in Riga. In the October 1942 issue of *Contemporary Jewish Record* we read:¹⁸²

“Mass deportation to Eastern Europe of the 60,000 Jews now in Amsterdam ghettos began at the rate of 600 per day, it was learned July 23. [...] On Aug. 19 [1942], the BBC stated that several hundred [Dutch-Jewish] deportees had been slain in Wilno by Nazis.”

Something curious appears if we map out the above Latvian and Lithuanian locations (Illustration 3). We immediately note that Balwa, Karsava, Malta, Livani, Subate, Svedasai, Utena, Varena and Merkinė as well as Vievis are all located more or less along an imaginary line running in NNE-SSW direction from Pskov to the south of Lithuania, not far from the Russian border. All of these locations also had direct or indirect access to the main railroad line Warsaw-Vilna-Daugavpils-Pskov-Leningrad. This suggests the construction of fortifications along the Baltic-Russian border, similar to the “Otto Line” in eastern Poland, or a network of armament factories placed along a supply route. Interestingly the German Jewess Jeanette Wolf, who was deported to Riga in early 1942, writes in her memoirs that Jews from the camps in and near the Latvian capital were sometimes transferred to “so-called *Stützpunktkommandos*” (reinforcement point commandos) near “the front” (likely meant is the Leningrad front) from

which they usually did not return.¹⁸³ Tory mentions in his diary entry from 20 August 1942 a (later rescinded) German demand that 700 Kovno Jews be sent to, among other locations, “Lake Ilmen near Leningrad” (south of Novgorod).¹⁸⁴

3.7.4. Reich Jews

Next, I have summarized below 17 entries relating to German and Austrian Jews apparently deported to the Ukraine. As mentioned above (§2.1. Page 225) it is an established fact that a large number of German, Austrian and Czech Jews were deported to *Reichskommissariat Ostland* in the period 1941-1942. Mainstream historians however do not acknowledge any transports of such Jews to *Reichskommissariat Ukrain*.

Last Name	First Name	Born	Wartime residence	Place of death	Died
Allina	Rosa	1880	Vienna	Kiev	1942
Bergsmann	Mor	1897	Loretto (AU)	Voroshilovgrad	1944
Dreschler	? (female)	1895	Vienna	Kiev	?
Gutman	Lia	1884	Vienna	Kiev	1942
Haas	Walter	?	Frankfurt	Kiev	?
Hacker	Lea	?	Vienna	Kiev	Aged 49
Horowitz	Yehoshua	1877	Vienna	Ukraine	1942
Lantner	Czarna	1892	Rohatyn	Ukraine	?
Levy	Beti	1881	Altona	Kupel	?
Lewkowicz	Julius	1876	Berlin	Krasnoameysk	1943
Lichtensztejn	Elza	1910	Graz	Ukraine	1942
Tobias	Irene	?	Hamburg	Ukraine	1943
Tobias	Kathe	?	Hamburg	Ukraine	1943
Federlein	Augusta	1883	Frankfurt	Ukraine	1942
Perle	Chaim	1907	Breslau	Krasnoameysk	?
Stern	Hedwig	1897	Frankfurt	Kiev	1943
Stern	Sally	1889	Frankfurt	Kiev	1943
Toprower	Bernhard	?	Vienna	Ukraine	1943

It is noteworthy that several of the individuals listed above were between 60 and 70 years old at the times of their reported deaths.

Voroshilovgrad is a city in south-eastern Ukraine now called Luhansk. Krasnoarmeysk (more commonly spelt Krasnoarmiysk) is located in eastern Ukraine, about halfway between Kharkov and Dnepropetrovsk, while

Kupel is located directly on the Ukrainian-Belarusian border, north-north-west of Zhitomir.

3.7.5. Jews from Belgium and Luxembourg

Finally I give 3 entries relating to Jews deported from Belgium and Luxembourg:

Last Name	First Name	Born	Wartime residence	Place of death	Died
Goldberg	Hellen	Sept. 1927	Antwerp	Russia	1942
Kohn	Pesach	1902	Brussels	Ukraine	1942
Levi	Esther	29/12/1889	Luxembourg	Minsk	?

The appearance here of Ukraine is noteworthy. In the December 1942 issue of *Contemporary Jewish Record* we read the following concerning the deportations of Jews from Belgium (which commenced in August that year):¹⁸⁵

“Jews from Malines were sent to Calais and other French coastal points to work on fortifications (Oct. 14), while those from the province of Limburg and other cities were shipped (Oct. 5) to the Nazi-occupied Ukraine. Several hundred others, including women from sixteen to fifty years of age, were exiled (Oct. 29) to the coal mines of Silesia. A report on Oct. 21 stated that 5,500 Antwerp Jews had been deported to the east.”

In the June 1943 issue of the same periodical we read:¹⁸⁶

“Over 14,000 Jews from Belgium and Holland arrived in Nazi-occupied Ochakov, in Kherson, to do slave labor, Geneva sources reported on April 29.”

These Jews had most likely been transited via Auschwitz (in the case of the Belgian Jews) and Sobibór. Ochakov in the Mykolaiv Oblast is a Ukrainian town by the Black Sea, located about halfway between Kherson and Odesa. During the war the district of Ochakov (Oceacov) was part of the Transnistrian reservation.

German railway historians Andreas Knipping and Reinhard Schulz contend that Belgian as well as Austrian Jews were deported to the Ukraine; unfortunately they do not provide a source for this assertion.¹⁸⁷ The Belgian exile newspaper *Onafhankelijk België* reported on 15 October 1942:

“Many cases of the deportation of Jews have been reported in occupied Belgium. In Liège, in particular, one family has suffered much. The father was sent to a workcamp in France. The daughter and two of her brothers

were ordered to go to a meeting-place from where Jews are sent to the Ukraine.”¹⁸⁸

To be continued.

Notes

- ¹ Maly means “small,” and therefore this camp is sometimes referred to in German literature as “Klein Trostinetz.”
- ² Paul Kohl, *Der Krieg der deutschen Wehrmacht und der Polizei 1941-1944. Sowjetische Überlebende berichten*, Fischer, Frankfurt am Main 1995, p. 105.
- ³ Protocols for Inquest Witness Lev Saevich Lansky, Special State Commission Document 124, lines 149-53, quoted in: Ilya Ehrenburg, Vasily Grossman (eds.), *The Complete Black Book of Russian Jewry*, Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick London 2002, p. 195.
- ⁴ *Ibid.*
- ⁵ Cf. Jürgen Graf & Carlo Mattogno, *Treblinka. Extermination Camp or Transit Camp?*, Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago 2004, p. 201.
- ⁶ Gertrude Schneider, *Exile and Destruction: the Fate of Austrian Jews, 1938-1945*, Greenwood Publishing, Westport 1995, p. 95.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 100.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 101.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 102.
- ¹⁰ Christian Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde. Die deutsche Wirtschafts- und Vernichtungspolitik in Weißrußland*, Hamburger Edition, Hamburg 1999, pp. 751-752.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 758-759.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, p. 759, note 1397.
- ¹³ Cf. Lukáš Přibyl, “Die Geschichte des Theresienstädter Transports ‘Be’ nach Estland,” in *Theresienstädter Studien und Dokumente 2001*, Institut Theresienstädter Initiative, Prague 2001.
- ¹⁴ Liste aller Transporte aus Theresienstadt, http://www.terezinstudies.cz/deu/ITI/database/tr_out_to
- ¹⁵ Cf. Jürgen Graf, Carlo Mattogno, *Concentration Camp Majdanek. A Historical and Technical Study*, Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago 2003, p. 91.
- ¹⁶ Hans Safrian, *Die Eichmann-Männer*, Europaverlag, Vienna/Zürich 1993, p. 186.
- ¹⁷ H.G. Adler, *Theresienstadt 1941-1945*, Tübingen 1955, p. 638.
- ¹⁸ H.G. Adler, *Der verwaltete Mensch. Studien zur Deportation der Juden aus Deutschland*, J.L.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), Tübingen 1974, p. 443.
- ¹⁹ M. Karny, “Das Schicksal der Theresienstaedter Osttransporte im Sommer und Herbst 1942,” *Judaica Bohemiae* vol. XXIV, no. 2, Prague 1988, p. 96, note 36.
- ²⁰ Gitta Sereny, *Into That Darkness. An Examination of Conscience*, Vintage Books, New York 1983, pp. 175-176.
- ²¹ Yitzhak Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka. The Operation Reinhard Death Camps*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington/Indianapolis 1987, p. 143.
- ²² Paul Kohl, *Der Krieg der deutschen Wehrmacht und der Polizei 1941-1944*, *op. cit.*, p. 109.
- ²³ H.G. Adler, *Der verwaltete Mensch.*, *op. cit.*, p. 198.

- ²⁴ Christian Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, *op. cit.*, p. 756.
- ²⁵ Karl Loewenstein, *Minsk. Im Lager der deutschen Juden*, Bundeszentrale für Heimatsdienst, Bonn 1961, p. 15.
- ²⁶ Testimony of Isak Grünberg to Rudolf Baumann, department chief in the Vienna Jewish Community, Vienna, 4 January 1962, DÖW 2563, reproduced in: Henry Friedlander, Sybil Milton (eds.), *Archives of the Holocaust, Volume 19: Dokumentationsarchiv des österreichischen Widerstandes*, Vienna, Garland Publishing, New York/London 1991, p. 357.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 358-359.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 360.
- ²⁹ Liste aller Transporte aus Theresienstadt, *op. cit.*
- ³⁰ Marat Botvinnik, *Pamjatniki genocida evreev Belarusi, Belaruskaja Navuka*, Minsk 2000, p. 21, 27.
- ³¹ Testimony of Isak Grünberg, *op. cit.*, p. 360.
- ³² Ilya Ehrenburg, Vasily Grossman (eds.), *The Complete Black Book of Russian Jewry*, Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick London 2002, p. 443.
- ³³ Rachel Margolis, Jim G. Tobias (eds.), *Die geheimen Notizen des K. Sakowicz. Dokumente zur Judenvernichtungen in Ponary*, Antogo Verlag, Nuremberg 2003, pp. 97-98.
- ³⁴ "Die JTA meldet," *Aufbau*, 24 August 1942, p. 10.
- ³⁵ Reuben Ainsztein, *Jewish Resistance in Nazi-Occupied Eastern Europe*, Paul Elek, London 1974, p. 704.
- ³⁶ *The Black Book. The Nazi Crime against the Jewish People*, Duell, Sloan and Pearce, New York 1946, p. 324.
- ³⁷ Aba Gefen, *Ein Funke Hoffnung. Ein Holocaust-Tagebuch*, Bleicher Verlag, Gerlingen 1987, p. 215.
- ³⁸ *Latvija pod igom natsizma. Sbornik arkhivnykh dokumentov*, Evropa, Moscow 2006, pp. 50-51.
- ³⁹ Bernhard Press, *The Murder of the Jews in Latvia 1941-1945*, Northwestern University Press, Evanston (Ill.) 2000, p. 159.
- ⁴⁰ For Hungarian Jews in Latvia cf. §2.2.3.
- ⁴¹ Anita Kugler, Scherwitz. *Der jüdische SS-Offizier*, Kiepenheuer & Witsch, Cologne 2004, p. 617.
- ⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 371.
- ⁴³ Monatsbericht der Arbeitsverwaltung des Gebietskommissariats für April 1943 an den Generalkommissariat Lettland, LVA 69/2/74, sheet 49; quoted in Anita Kugler, Scherwitz. *Der jüdische SS-Offizier*, *op. cit.*, p. 326.
- ⁴⁴ Avraham Tory, *Surviving the Holocaust. The Kovno Ghetto Diary*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge (MA)/London 1990, p. 69, 148, 275-278.
- ⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 209.
- ⁴⁶ "Lettische Partisanen befreien 600 Juden," *Aufbau*, 25 August 1944, p. 3.
- ⁴⁷ Kalman Linkimer, *Nineteen Months in a Cellar: How 11 Jews Eluded Hitler's Henchmen*, Jewish Community of Riga/Latvian Jewish Museum, Riga 2008, p. 68.
- ⁴⁸ Lerner states in his interview with Lanzmann that the leader of the Sobibór uprising, Alexander Pechersky, was already in the camp when he arrived. The transport with Pechersky in turn departed from Minsk on 18 September 1943.

- ⁴⁹ Miriam Novitch, *Sobibor. Martyrdom and Revolt*, Holocaust Library, New York 1980, p. 112.
- ⁵⁰ At the end of the text Lerner states that “today I am an officer in the Israeli police” (*ibid.*, p. 113). Lerner began working for the Israeli police in 1951; cf. Jules Schelvis, *Sobibór. A History of a Nazi Death Camp*, Berg Publishers, Oxford/New York 2007, p. 236. Novitch’s book was originally published in French in 1978.
- ⁵¹ Miriam Novitch, *Sobibor. Martyrdom and Revolt*, *op. cit.*, p. 111
- ⁵² Claude Lanzmann, *Sobibor*. 14 octobre 1943, 16 heures, Cahiers du Cinéma/récit, Paris 2001.
- ⁵³ Transcript of the Shoah Interview with Yehuda Lerner, p. 1. Online: http://resources.ushmm.org/intermedia/film_video/spielberg_archive/transcript/RG60_5030/91645B27-8317-421E-A32C-50450DC5BDC4.pdf
- ⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 2.
- ⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 3.
- ⁵⁶ Christian Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, *op. cit.*, p. 762, note 1421.
- ⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 762-763.
- ⁵⁸ Krystyna Marczevska, Władysław Wazniewski, “Treblinka w świetle akt Delegatury Rządu RP na Kraji,” in: *Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce*, Vol. XIX, Warsaw 1968, p. 137.
- ⁵⁹ Raul Hilberg, Stanisław Staron, Josef Kermisz (eds.), *The Diary of Adam Czerniakow*, Stein & Day, New York 1979, pp. 339-340.
- ⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 340.
- ⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 341.
- ⁶² *Ibid.*
- ⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 343.
- ⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 344.
- ⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 347.
- ⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 358.
- ⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 381.
- ⁶⁸ Needless to say the young Jews deported to Treblinka I may also have been sent to the east after first having passed through delousing at Treblinka II.
- ⁶⁹ Yisrael Gutman, *The Jews of Warsaw, 1939-1943: Ghetto, Underground, Revolt*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington/Indianapolis 1989, p. 214, 448 note 34.
- ⁷⁰ Christian Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, *op. cit.*, p. 763, note 1424.
- ⁷¹ Jüdisches Leben in Mönchengladbach, http://www.cjz-moenchengladbach.de/body_in_m_gladbach.html
- ⁷² Andrej Angrick, Peter Klein, *The ‘Final Solution’ in Riga: Exploitation and Annihilation*, Berghahn Books, New York/Oxford 2009, p. 203.
- ⁷³ Inge Stolten, *Das alltägliche Exil. Leben zwischen Hakenkreuz und Währungsreform*, J.H.W. Dietz, Berlin/Bonn 1982, p. 73
- ⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 83.
- ⁷⁵ Joshua Rubenstein, Ilya Altman, *The Unknown Black Book: the Holocaust in the German-Occupied Soviet Territories*, Indiana University Press/USHMM, Bloomington & Indianapolis 2008, p. 257.
- ⁷⁶ A. Tory, *Surviving the Holocaust*, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

- ⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 116.
- ⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 117.
- ⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 117-118.
- ⁸⁰ Entry for 14 June 1943; *Ibid.*, p. 389.
- ⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 119.
- ⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 407.
- ⁸³ Online: http://www.mapywig.org/m/German_maps/German_WIG/Gb_324_Koschedoren_1944.jpg
- ⁸⁴ Avraham Tory, *Surviving the Holocaust*, *op. cit.*, p. 159.
- ⁸⁵ http://www.yadvashem.org/wps/portal/IY_HON_Welcome
- ⁸⁶ http://www.yadvashem.org/wps/portal/!ut/p/ s.7 0 A/7 0 S5?New_WCM_Context=http://namescm.yadvashem.org/wps/wcm/connect/Yad+Vashem/Hall+Of+Names/Left+Links/en/3HON_FAQs
- ⁸⁷ The Jews of Klodawa were reportedly deported to Chełmno in early January 1942; cf. <http://www.iajgsjewishcemeteryproject.org/poland/klodawa.html>
- ⁸⁸ The form filled in by Zelda's sister, Paula Syzling Kempinski, a resident of Freehold, New Jersey, states that Zelda was gassed in Chełmno in December 1940. This "death camp," however, did not open until December 1941. Zelda Zysling's supposed death date should thus rather be December 1941, aged 15.
- ⁸⁹ Also on this form Paula Syzling Kempinski gives the erroneous date December 1940.
- ⁹⁰ Bradley F. Smith, Agnes F. Peterson (eds.), *Heinrich Himmler. Geheimreden 1933 bis 1945 und andere Ansprachen*, Propyläen Verlag, Frankfurt/Main 1974, p. 200.
- ⁹¹ Martin Weinmann (ed.), *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem (CCP), Zweitausendeins*, Frankfurt am Main 1990.
- ⁹² Christoph Dieckmann, "Das Ghetto und das Konzentrationslager in Kaunas 1941-1944," in: Ulrich Herbert, Karin Orth, Christoph Dieckmann (eds.), *Die nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager: Entwicklung und Struktur*, Wallstein Verlag, Göttingen 1998, p. 467, note 69.
- ⁹³ According to the editor of the Kruk diary, a report on Biała Waka dating from 18 August 1942 is found in the YIVO Archive, Sutzkever Collection, no. 250.
- ⁹⁴ *The Tragedy of Lithuania 1941-1944*, Alex Yakovlev, Yaroslav 2008, pp. 215-216.
- ⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 104-106, 159.
- ⁹⁶ Christoph Dieckmann, "Das Ghetto und das Konzentrationslager in Kaunas 1941-1944," *op. cit.*, pp. 469-470, note 103.
- ⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 467, note 69.
- ⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 470, note 109. Harry Gordon, *The Shadow of Death. The Holocaust in Lithuania*, University Press of Kentucky, Lexington 1992, p. 135.
- ⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 136.
- ¹⁰⁰ Reska Weiss, *Journey through Hell*, Valentine Mitchell, London 1961, p. 81.
- ¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 95.
- ¹⁰² H. Gordon, *The Shadow of Death*, *op. cit.*, p. 119.
- ¹⁰³ Cf. Christoph Dieckmann, "Der Krieg und die Ermordung der litauischen Juden," in: Ulrich Herbert (ed), *Nationalsozialistische Vernichtungspolitik 1939-*

1945. *Neue Forschungen und Kontroversen*, Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, Frankfurt am Main 1998, p. 293.
- ¹⁰⁴ H. Kruk, *The Last Days of the Jerusalem of Lithuania*, *op. cit.*, pp. 327-328.
- ¹⁰⁵ *Contemporary Jewish Record*, vol. 5, no. 2 (April 1942), p. 190.
- ¹⁰⁶ Cf. <http://www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/rumsiskes/>
- ¹⁰⁷ Wolfgang Benz, Barbara Distel (eds.), *Der Ort des Terrors: Geschichte der nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager*, vol. 8, C.H. Beck, Munich 2008, p. 58, note 74.
- ¹⁰⁸ A. Angrick, P. Klein, *The 'Final Solution' in Riga*, *op. cit.*, p. 200.
- ¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 235.
- ¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 235-236.
- ¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 238-239.
- ¹¹² *Ibid.*, p. 239.
- ¹¹³ Gunita Nagle, "Sapiga patiesiba," online: <http://vip.latnet.lv/LPRA/salaspils.htm>
- ¹¹⁴ Andrew Ezergailis, Harold Otto, Gvido Augusts, *Nazi/Soviet Disinformation about the Holocaust in Nazi-Occupied Latvia*, Latvijas 50 Gadu Okupācijas Muzeja Fonds, Riga 2005, p. 95.
- ¹¹⁵ *Judisk Krönika*, vol. 14, no. 2 (February 1945), p. 27.
- ¹¹⁶ *Contemporary Jewish Record*, vol. 6, no. 1 (February 1943), p. 67.
- ¹¹⁷ The *Einlieferungsbuch* of the Stutthof camp has entries for 13 Austrian and 1,125 Reich German Jews (the vast majority female) who had arrived from Riga or Kovno in the summer and autumn of 1944. Unpublished survey compiled by Carlo Mattogno.
- ¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 115.
- ¹¹⁹ A. Angrick, P. Klein, *The 'Final Solution' in Riga*, *op. cit.*, p. 243.
- ¹²⁰ Karlis Kangeris, Uldis Neiburgs, Rudite Viksne, "Salaspils nometne: vestures avoti un historiografiskais materials" ("The Salaspils Camp: Historical Sources and Historiographic Material"), in: *Okupācijas Rezīmi Baltijas Valstīs 1940-1991*, Latvijas Vēsturnieku Komisijas Raksti, 25 sejums, Latvijas vestures institūta apgads, Riga 2009, p. 201, 204.
- ¹²¹ Bernhard Press, *The Murder of the Jews in Latvia 1941-1945*, *op. cit.*, pp. 159-160.
- ¹²² "Das Ende der Balkan-Juden," *Die Zeitung* (London), 1 January 1943, p. 2.
- ¹²³ R. Ainsztain, *Jewish Resistance in Nazi-Occupied Eastern Europe*, *op. cit.*, p. 708.
- ¹²⁴ Margers Vestermanis, "Haftstätten und Todeslager im okkupierten Lettland," in: U. Herbert, K. Orth, C. Dieckmann (eds.), *Die nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager*, *op. cit.*, p. 487.
- ¹²⁵ http://www.yadvashem.org/wps/portal/!ut/p/ s.7 0 A/7 0 2KE?last_name=Grafman&first_name=Abraham&location=Warsaw&next_form=results
- ¹²⁶ Margers Vestermanis, "Haftstätten und Todeslager im okkupierten Lettland," *op. cit.*, p. 488. Vestermanis gives as his source LVA, P-132/26/13, Bl. 197.
- ¹²⁷ M. Weinmann, *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem*, *op. cit.*, p. 661.
- ¹²⁸ H. Krausnick, H-H. Wilhelm, *Die Truppe des Weltanschauungskrieges*, Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, Munich 1981, p. 612.

- ¹²⁹ Gertrude Schneider, *Journey into Terror. Story of the Riga Ghetto*, 2nd revised and expanded edition, Praeger, Westport (Connecticut) / London 2001, p. 38.
- ¹³⁰ Gertrude Schneider (Ed.), *Muted Voices: Jewish Survivors of Latvia Remember*, Philosophical Library, New York 1987, p. 142.
- ¹³¹ Lotte Strauss, *Over the Green Hill: A German-Jewish Memoir 1913-1943*, Fordham University Press, New York 1999, pp. 111-112.
- ¹³² Elisabeth Kraus, *Die Familie Mosse. Deutsch-jüdisches Bürgertum im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*, C.H. Beck, Munich 1999, p. 581.
- ¹³³ NARA A3355, Reel 1, as summarized online: <http://www.jewishgen.org/infocfiles/capturedGermanRecords.html>
- ¹³⁴ Raul Hilberg, "Auschwitz and the Final Solution" in: Y. Gutman, M. Berenbaum (eds.), *Anatomy of the Auschwitz Death Camp*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis 1994, p. 91, note 29.
- ¹³⁵ Compilation in the indictment of Berlin Gestapo officials, February 22, 1969, 1 Js 9/65, Leo Baeck Institute microfilm 239.
- ¹³⁶ Danuta Czech, *Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz-Birkenau 1939-1945*, Rowohlt, Reinbek 1989, p. 382.
- ¹³⁷ Jack Ratz, *Endless Miracles*, Shengold Publishers, New York 1998, pp. 50-51.
- ¹³⁸ B. Brodovsky, "Children's Blood Factory," *Soviet Russia Today*, April 1945, p. 23.
- ¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 23, 32.
- ¹⁴⁰ K. Kangeris, U. Neiburgs, R. Viksne, "Salaspils nometne: vestures avoti un historiografiskais materials," *op. cit.*, pp. 206-208.
- ¹⁴¹ Karlis Sausnitis (ed.), *V Salaspilsskom lagere smerti*, Pervod, Riga 1964.
- ¹⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 114.
- ¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 126, 128, 152.
- ¹⁴⁴ Christian Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, *op. cit.*, p. 761.
- ¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, note 1414.
- ¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, note 1413.
- ¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁴⁸ M. Botvinnik, *Pamjatniki genocida evreev Belarusi*, *op. cit.*, p. 13.
- ¹⁴⁹ Quoted in Yisrael Gutman, *The Jews of Warsaw*, *op. cit.*, p. 219.
- ¹⁵⁰ Mary Berg, *Warsaw Ghetto. A Diary*, L.B. Fischer, New York 1945, p. 175.
- ¹⁵¹ David P. Boder Interviews Rachel Gurmanova; August 17, 1946; Paris, France. Online: http://voices.iit.edu/interview?doc=gurmanovaR&display=gurmanovaR_en
- ¹⁵² Yisrael Gutman, *The Jews of Warsaw*, *op. cit.*, p. 219.
- ¹⁵³ *Faschismus – Getto – Massenmord. Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkriegs*, Röderberg Verlag, Frankfurt am Main 1960, p. 496.
- ¹⁵⁴ Abraham Lewin, *A Cup of Tears. A Diary of the Warsaw Ghetto*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford 1988, pp. 271-272, note 168.
- ¹⁵⁵ Yisrael Gutman, *The Jews of Warsaw*, *op. cit.*, p. 220.
- ¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 220-221.
- ¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 147.
- ¹⁵⁸ "Die JTA meldet," *Aufbau*, 26 June 1942, p. 3.
- ¹⁵⁹ Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 219.

- ¹⁶⁰ Abraham Lewin, *A Cup of Tears*, *op. cit.*, p. 143. Previously, on 26 July 1942, Lewin made the lapidary note “‘Good News’ from Brześć,” likely referring to another letter; *ibid.*, p. 138.
- ¹⁶¹ Cf. Y. Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, *op. cit.*, p. 133.
- ¹⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 51.
- ¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 386.
- ¹⁶⁴ *Contemporary Jewish Record*, vol. 5, no. 3 (June 1942), p. 310.
- ¹⁶⁵ Y. Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, *op. cit.*, p. 383, 387.
- ¹⁶⁶ The Holocaust 1942, <http://www.neveragain.org/1942.htm>
- ¹⁶⁷ Krakow Ghetto, <http://www.deathcamps.org/occupation/krakow%20ghetto.html>
- ¹⁶⁸ Serge Klarsfeld, *Memorial to the Jews Deported from France 1942-1944*, Beate Klarsfeld Foundation, New York 1987, p. xxvi, 176.
- ¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. xx.
- ¹⁷⁰ *Contemporary Jewish Record*, vol. 5, no. 6 (December 1942), p. 634.
- ¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 642.
- ¹⁷² *JTA Daily News Bulletin*, vol. 10, no. 170 (23 July 1943), pp. 1-2.
- ¹⁷³ “Rumänska judar hem från fronten,” *Dagens Nyheter*, 2 January 1944, p. 1.
- ¹⁷⁴ http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/judaica/ejud_0002_0003_0_02804.html
- ¹⁷⁵ *Aufbau*, 6 November 1942, p. 16.
- ¹⁷⁶ S. Klarsfeld, *Memorial to the Jews Deported from France 1942-1944*, *op. cit.*, pp. xxvi-xxvii, 312, 319.
- ¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 312.
- ¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. xxxvi.
- ¹⁷⁹ http://www.dutchjewry.org/inmemoriam/InMemoriamN_search.asp
- ¹⁸⁰ Cf. <http://www.yivo.org/uploads/files/Lithuania.htm>
- ¹⁸¹ A. Tory, *Surviving the Holocaust*, *op. cit.*, p. 6.
- ¹⁸² *Contemporary Jewish Record*, vol. 5, no. 5 (October 1942), p. 530.
- ¹⁸³ Jeanette Wolf, *Mit Bibel und Bebel (Gedenkbuch)*, Verlag Neue Gesellschaft, Bonn 1980, p. 40.
- ¹⁸⁴ A. Tory, *Surviving the Holocaust*, *op. cit.*, p. 126.
- ¹⁸⁵ *Contemporary Jewish Record*, vol. 5, no. 6 (December 1942), pp. 630-631.
- ¹⁸⁶ *Contemporary Jewish Record*, vol. 6, no. 3 (June 1943), p. 300.
- ¹⁸⁷ Andreas Knipping, Reinhard Schulz, *Reichsbahn hinter der Ostfront 1941-1944*, Transpress Verlag, Stuttgart 1999, p. 220.
- ¹⁸⁸ *Onafhankelijk België*, no. 42 (15 October 1942), p. 5.

Going Underground

‘Catacomb Revisionists’ and Revisionist Repression

Frederic Freeman

Introduction

For many, the phrase “going underground” conjures up images of anti-establishment sub-cultures. Oftentimes, we think of groups or individuals “going underground” when their thoughts or ideas have resulted in persecution in mainstream society. Fyodor Dostoevsky utilized the term in his story “Notes from Underground,” his all-out assault on Enlightenment rationalism. Others may think of the “Underground Railroad,” the clandestine routes that slaves used throughout the nineteenth century to escape to “free states” in the northern United States.

The earliest images that come to mind for most people however, date back nearly two thousand years to early Christian culture in ancient Rome. Christian belief in bodily resurrection resulted in their desire to bury their dead. These early underground burial sites became known as the ‘Catacombs.’ Since Roman law prohibited burials inside the city limits, Christians devised their underground burial places right outside the city limits. The catacombs were used both as burial places and for memorial services.¹

Popular culture often depicts the catacombs as secret hiding places for Christians throughout the long period of their persecution by Roman authorities. Today historians largely disagree with this portrayal of the catacombs.² It is this popular image however, that resulted in Walter Lüftl’s coining of the phrase “Catacomb Revisionists.”³ In a letter to the editor of *The Revisionist*, Lüftl wrote:⁴

“There you can see how we can create proselyte revisionists, or how they come into being, and be it by pure coincidence! I call them ‘catacomb revisionists,’ because like the early Christians in Rome, they, too, can survive only in catacombs [...]. You will not believe how many people I already have converted into catacomb revisionists over a nice glass of wine. But when they want to spread the knowledge they gained after they started to learn more following their conversion, they all subsequently encounter problems in their families and social circles, because most people cannot distinguish between ‘belief and facts.’”

Today revisionist historians who refute or even dare to question the established orthodoxy of the official Holocaust story find themselves persecuted and imprisoned throughout the world. The persecution has not prevented revisionists from writing, publishing, and speaking on these matters, but has largely driven them “underground” or turned them into “catacomb revisionists.” Many newcomers to revisionism, for fear of backlash and persecution, have taken to the use of pseudonyms in their writing. In some cases, even established revisionists have utilized this age-old tactic to avoid both governmental and non-governmental repression for having expressed their viewpoint with regard to this one historical period.

Early History

Holocaust revisionism has a long and distinguished history of the use of pseudonyms or *noms des plumes* by its authors. Three early titles were written by Josef Ginsburg using the pseudonym J.G. Burg. These included *Schuld und Schicksal* (*Guilt and Destiny*), 1962, *Suendenboecke* (*Scapegoats*), 1967, and *NS-Verbrechen* (*National Socialist Crimes*), 1968. Ginsburg, a Jewish author, had been deported during the war by the Nazis. Presumably Ginsburg used this pseudonym to protect both himself and his family.⁵

One of the earliest English-language revisionist books that addressed the Holocaust story was *The Myth of the Six Million*. This title originally appeared in 1969. Its author was identified simply as “anonymous.”⁶ Today it is known that this book was written by David L. Hoggan, an academic who taught at the University of California at Berkeley, San Francisco State College and several other schools of higher learning.⁷ The Noon-tide Press published Hoggan’s study anonymously, purportedly to avoid academic retribution against Hoggan.⁸

In 1974, the highly influential booklet, *Did Six Million Really Die?* was published under the pen name Richard Harwood. The booklet has since had its author identified as Richard Verrall. The pseudonym “Harwood” was later used by several different authors including David McCalden and Ditlieb Felderer.⁹ McCalden, who became the first director of the Institute for Historical Review, frequently used the pen name Lewis Brandon.¹⁰ During Ernst Zündel’s 1988 trial for having published *Did Six Million Really Die?*, Bradley Smith, founder and director of the Committee for Open Debate on the Holocaust (CODOH), pointed out that it was sometimes necessary to use pen names because of the violence directed at one simply for expressing doubt about the bona fides of a purported historical event.¹¹

Ditlieb Felderer would also publish an early revisionist book, *Auschwitz Exit*, using the pen name Abraham Cohen. Felderer claimed that he used the pen name in order to gain entry to various communist countries in order to conduct research and that use of his real name would result in denial of entry. Felderer's concerns appear to have been justified. In 1981, he was imprisoned by the government of Poland.¹²

It is clear that revisionists have used pseudonyms from their earliest days. Pseudonyms were the logical result of real threats that ranged from governmental repression to mob violence. In an effort to protect themselves, their careers and even their loved ones, revisionists frequently resorted to various pen names. This was not a matter of "intellectual dishonesty" as some anti-revisionists have charged but rather a means to avoid persecution.

Critiques

The use of pseudonyms by revisionists has been frequently condemned by its detractors. Deborah Lipstadt used her typical derogatory tone with regard to pseudonyms throughout her *Denying the Holocaust*. She took aim at Richard Harwood and the original claim that he was with the University of London. For Lipstadt, the attempts to "camouflage" Harwood's identity was a matter of hiding his association with the British National Front.¹³

Perhaps the most-read critique of revisionist use of pseudonyms is that of Harry Mazal of the Holocaust History Project, an anti-revisionist group that functions primarily on the Internet. Mazal mainly targeted Germar Rudolf, for what Mazal calls his "continuing attempt to obfuscate and confuse." Mazal writes:¹⁴

"Mr. Rudolf, like many other Holocaust deniers, has created a variety of pseudonyms, referred to as nym in common Internet parlance. Most deniers use such pseudonyms to conceal their identities in the various Usenet discussion groups."

Mazal may not go as far as Lipstadt in attributing sinister intentions to revisionists, but clearly he believes that the use of nym as he calls them are all about creating confusion and covering up true identities. He also takes a shot at Samuel Crowell complaining, "Some, like "Samuel Crowell" use a nym to avoid embarrassment in their legitimate work place."¹⁵ Still, Mazal refuses to address why revisionists should be "embarrassed" in their work place and even further who might cause them "embarrassment." Beyond

“embarrassment,” many revisionists have lost careers due to their revisionist activities.¹⁶

Some revisionists also have criticized the use of pseudonyms and pen names. Despite the long tradition of their use, various revisionists who are open about their work and viewpoints have sometimes expressed distaste at those who prefer pseudonyms. To the open revisionist, the use of a pseudonym can diminish the trust and confidence they are willing to place in the “underground” revisionist.” Mark Weber, while editor of the *Journal of Historical Review*, was often reluctant to publish works submitted under pen names. David Irving also has made various comments through the years targeted at those who prefer to remain in the shadows. This position is certainly more understandable from those who like Irving have lost everything and even suffered imprisonment for their battle for revisionism than from the anti-revisionists who hypocritically denounce the use of pseudonyms and at the same time applaud the repression of those who express doubt about the Holocaust.

Anti-Revisionist Legislation

Although revisionists feared reprisal even dating back to the early 1960s, persecution and governmental repression have become a growing threat largely since the 1980s. In a short article, an anonymous revisionist author summed up the situation:¹⁷

“By the 1980s there had arisen a powerful movement among mainstream Holocaust scholars, Jewish organizations, and politicians in Europe and Canada to actually criminalize dissent regarding the popular version of the Holocaust. Whereas only the United States was insulated from such censorship attempts because of a constitutional guarantee of freedom of speech, it had been assumed by many that the rest of the countries of the Western world, while lacking such a free-speech guarantee, nonetheless supported the notion of intellectual freedom, i.e. the principle that no one should be persecuted by their government for the “crime” of writing or reading unpopular material.”

The writer goes on to report:¹⁸

“[...] by the year 1996 the only European nation to lack some kind of an “anti-revisionist” law would be Denmark, a small victory for revisionism rendered moot by a European Common Market regulation that enables a citizen of one European country to sue the citizen of any other for an offense that may only be an offense in the first country. By 1996,

Canada, Australia, South Africa, and Mexico would have all persecuted Holocaust revisionists by law."

With each passing year, the number of countries that outlawed Holocaust revisionism grew. France's repressive *Loi Gayssot* was enacted on July 13, 1990. The Swiss voted their anti-revisionist law into effect in September, 1994. Germany would join suit in the autumn of 1994 making it a criminal offense to "deny or trivialize any act committed under National Socialist rule."¹⁹ Belgium would pass their Negationism Law in March, 1995. Other countries were soon to follow. As the governments of Europe enacted what would amount to "thoughtcrimes" legislation against revisionists at the request of various Jewish activist organizations, revisionists were further driven underground.²⁰ This drive to outlaw revisionism had the side effect of even greater use of pseudonyms in the 1990s and the years that followed.

The Internet Age

Although the result of a long history, the Internet largely went public in the 1990s. Revisionists were there from the start. In August 1991, Dan Gannon began his BBS (bulletin-board service) "Banished CPU."²¹ Throughout 1992, a heated debate on the Holocaust controversy raged on discussion forums on the GENie and Prodigy systems.²² The most important discussions, however, began taking place on the Usenet newsgroup alt.revisionism.

The Internet became a principal driving force in the use of various identities by revisionists. Email addresses were typically created with something other than the individual's full name. Likewise, "handles" on newsgroups including alt.revisionism were often creative and typically masked one's true identity. Revisionists as well as anti-revisionists, and just about anyone else who wandered into any newsgroup now had an ID other than their given name.

At times, revisionists were forthright in identifying themselves, only to find their private information catalogued and distributed. As harassment increased, the drive toward anonymity increased as well.

Germar Rudolf

Germar Rudolf entered the revisionist scene in 1992 right as Europe was enacting tougher anti-revisionist legislation and the Internet was becoming

a household word. Rudolf, it can be said, raised the use of pseudonyms to an art-form. Rudolf, however has been attacked more for his use of pseudonyms than any other revisionist.

Due to Rudolf's expertise as a chemist, he found himself being called by several defense lawyers to be an expert witness in trials against revisionists in Germany. These included trials against Udo Walendy (February 1992), Gerd Honsik (March 1992), David Irving (May 1992), Max Wahl (July 1992). Rudolf found that, in these and other trials, the judges rejected any and all evidence presented by the defense, including that of expert witnesses. He writes:

"In one case, I had to learn that a chemist (me) was rejected because he was neither a toxicologist nor a historian, an engineer (Leuchter) was rejected because he was neither a chemist nor a historian, and a historian (Prof. Haverbeck) was rejected because he was neither a chemist nor an engineer."

Rudolf concluded that the German legal system was corrupt and that an expert witness would need to simultaneously be an engineer, a chemist, a toxicologist, a historian and even a barrister. With this in mind, he set out to mock the current injustice in Germany by creating a person with all of these qualifications. Rudolf set to work on his first revisionist publication, a brochure entitled *"Die Zeit lügt!"* After discussions with the publisher, Karl Philipp, they decided to divide their "expert" author into four. The work was published in October 1992 under four pen names: Dipl.-Ing. Hans Karl Westphal, engineer; Dr. Werner Kretschmer, barrister, Dr. Christian Konrad, historian, Dr. Rainer Scholtz, chemist and pharmacologist. To this day, Rudolf is charged with dishonesty because of the use of these names and the "academic credentials" he attributed to them.²⁴

By the Spring of 1992, Rudolf had prepared his expert report on the Auschwitz 'gas chambers' at the request of the legal defense of Otto Remer. While Rudolf was postponing any general publication of his work until he was awarded his PhD from the Max Planck Institute, Remer went ahead and published and distributed the work in early 1993.²⁵ As Rudolf found himself on a collision course with the German legal system, he opted



Revisionist Germar Rudolf utilized several pseudonyms to avoid persecution and prosecution for writing and publishing scholarly books. Photo: 2002, www.codoh.com

to go further “underground” and continued his writings under various pen names. In early 1994, *Prof. Dr. Ernst Nolte: Auch Holocaust-Lügen haben kurze Beine* would be released under the pseudonym Manfred Köhler. Rudolf’s own legal situation would be taken up in *Der Fall Rudolf (The Rudolf Case)* under the pseudonym Wilhelm Schlesiger.

With the newly fortified anti-revisionist laws passed in the autumn of 1994, Rudolf found himself dragged before the German legal system in a trial that lasted from late 1994 to mid-1995. As his trial was beginning, Rudolf had prepared yet another book for publication. Due to his current situation with the German courts, Rudolf decided to publish this new work, *Grundlagen zur Zeitgeschichte* (published in English as *Dissecting the Holocaust*) under a new pseudonym, Ernst Gauss. During the trial, German police raided Rudolf’s home and found yet another work, the nearly complete, *Auschwitz: Nackte Fakten (Auschwitz: Plain Facts)* on his computer.²⁶ In *Auschwitz: Nackte Fakten*, Rudolf once again used two now-familiar pen names, Ernst Gauss and Manfred Köhler.

Rudolf’s energy and the sheer volume of his efforts resulted in his later publications often citing his earlier works. Rudolf now found himself in the uncomfortable position of having one of his pen names citing another of his own secret identities. Although he clearly was forced into this situation by repressive laws targeting revisionist publications, Rudolf’s detractors had a field day. Rudolf has been charged with every type of duplicity and intellectual dishonesty by those who seem content to turn a blind eye to the draconian legal system in which Rudolf found himself. Rudolf recently completed serving a prison sentence for publishing his expert report in Germany.

The Current Climate

Today, revisionists find themselves in a world that is increasingly oppressive to their work. Anti-revisionist laws, far from achieving their stated purpose, now stifle free speech and expression and prevent a proper understanding of the Holocaust. In addition they attempt to control the thoughts of citizens through intimidation. Several revisionists sat in European prison cells including Germar Rudolf and Ernst Zündel. British historian David Irving recently served out 400 days in solitary confinement in Austria for comments he made in 1989.

Although some supporters of free speech have written articles and made statements denouncing the treatment of revisionists, most remain notably

silent. So-called human rights organizations like Amnesty International refuse to defend or come to the aid of Holocaust revisionists.

Other organizations go beyond inactivity or silence to openly attacking freedom of speech when it comes to revisionists. Upon the release of David Irving from prison, Efraim Zuroff, the director of the Simon Wiesenthal Center's office in Israel said that the court's ruling was the "worst possible response to last week's Holocaust denial conference in Tehran and will only encourage those who support these mad ideas."²⁷

In a recent fund-raising letter, the Anti-Defamation League, which claims to fight "to secure justice and fair treatment for all" addressed the recent Holocaust conference in Tehran. They wrote to their potential financial backers not only about the threat of Holocaust "denial," but of the need to monitor and track revisionists around the world:²⁸

"The conference clearly illustrates that hate is a global threat. To successfully fight it, we must challenge it wherever and whenever it appears. We need your support more than ever, to track and report on these racists. We need your support to expose their hateful agenda. We need your support to do everything possible to ensure that world leaders do not waver in their resolve against an increasingly dangerous Iran."

Revisionists find themselves in an increasingly hostile environment. The news media has misrepresented their viewpoints and taken entirely to the use of the derogatory and misleading term "Holocaust deniers" to identify those who try to bring the Holocaust story into accord with the facts. Holocaust revisionists have been denounced by world leaders including: Tony Blair, Prime Minister of Britain; Angela Merkel, Chancellor of Germany; Ehud Olmert, Prime Minister of Israel; George Bush, President of the United States and even Kofi Annan, the United Nations Secretary General.²⁹

Recommendations for the Future (and the Present)

Revisionism has always been about correcting the historical record in the light of a more complete collection of historical facts.³⁰ Revisionists can be typified as being relentless in their pursuit of the truth even in the face of overwhelming opposition. In a letter to dissident Israeli journalist Israel Shamir, Germar Rudolf described himself (a revisionist archetype) as follows:³¹

"That's my personality: a contrarian with enormous will power, stubbornness, if need be [...]. Pressure causes counter pressure. In this way I am a simple physical principle. Here is my human right to doubt, research, scrutinize, disagree, dispute, refute, challenge, question. [...] And that is the strongest motivation: Anybody who punishes me for merely exercising my human right of being a human = a creature able to doubt and explore, will meet my utmost unbreakable resistance. I won't allow anybody to reduce me to a submissive slave. Nobody."

Rudolf writes, "Pressure causes counter pressure." With the extreme pressure currently being exerted against revisionists, their resolve is only strengthened. Revisionists have the right to doubt, to research, to challenge and to question just as anyone else does. The Holocaust is just like any other historical event. It must be researched to arrive at the truth of what exactly did and what did not happen. It should not be protected by law.

The research, the publications, the debates, especially those on the Internet, must go on. The writers and thinkers who are currently in prison deserve the support of those who are currently free. While some are willing to stake their personal reputations and fortunes on this battle for truth, others are not. Neither position is wrong. For those who fear that they have too much to lose in this struggle, going "underground" is an acceptable and even valued strategy.

In his brief letter, Walter Lüftl wrote about bringing new converts to Holocaust revisionism. These new converts may only be able to survive in the 'catacombs.' If so, then why not? Revisionists may be forced underground into the 'catacombs' for the time being as a way to carry on our work and to fight for the freedom of those in European prison cells. As we consider the early persecution of Christians and the martyrs who perished in prison cells and for the amusement of Roman rulers in the bloody coliseum, we should also recall that Rome was unable to eliminate Christianity. The apostle John, no stranger to persecution, wrote in his gospel, "the truth will set you free."³² Revisionists will only be set free by the truth. Acceptance and understanding of the truth of the Holocaust will result in the repeal of Europe's anti-revisionist laws. The elimination of these hateful laws which strike at the means for one to be fully human will usher in a new time of freedom and a greater understanding among nations. These goals are well-worth the struggle. They warrant going underground for the time being, for they forecast our ultimate emergence from the dark of the 'catacombs' into the light and the mainstream of society and contemporary historical inquiry.

Notes

This work is a revised version of an article originally published on www.codoh.com.

- ¹ Catacombs of Rome: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catacombs_of_Rome. Although typically thought of as a Christian invention, the use of catacombs as a burial place was also practiced by Jews of that historical period.
- ² Justio L. Gonzalez, *The Story of Christianity: The Early Church to the Present Day*. Prince Press, Peabody Mass, 2005, p.95. Although it is admitted that the catacombs may have been used as hiding places on occasion, this was certainly not the principal reason for their creation nor was it their ultimate function.
- ³ Walter Lüftl, letter to the editor, *The Revisionist [TR]*, Vol. 2 No.3 (2004), p. 353. See also Germar Rudolf, *Lectures on the Holocaust*. Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago, Ill., 2005, p. 130.
- ⁴ *Ibid.*
- ⁵ Arthur Butz, *The Hoax of the Twentieth Century: The Case against the Presumed Extermination of European Jewry*, Institute for Historical Review, Torrance, Cal., 1985, pp. 11-12. Despite Ginsburg's attempt at anonymity, he was beaten by a gang of Jewish thugs while visiting his wife's grave in an Israelite cemetery in Munich.
- ⁶ *The Myth of the Six Million* is today valuable only from the standpoint of the historiography of Holocaust revisionism. It should be understood that revisionism has advanced tremendously since this early publication. As early as 1977, Arthur Butz strongly critiqued this book and commented on its "many errors." See *The Hoax of the Twentieth Century*, p. 12.
- ⁷ David Hoggan earned his PhD in History from Harvard University in 1948. He later taught at several colleges and universities including Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), University of California (Berkeley), Carthage Lutheran College in Illinois, San Francisco State College and the Amerika Institute of the University of Munich.
- ⁸ Hoggan's manuscript was published in an unauthorized edition by Willis Carto's Noontide Press. The exact circumstances surrounding the attribution of this book to "anonymous" are unclear. Hoggan's book was recently reissued by Carto's Barnes Review Bookstore under the title *The Myth of the Six Million: An Examination of the Nazi Extermination Plot*. Additional details of the "discovery" and publication of the book by Carto are said to be included. This author has not read these details, but understands them to be suspect. See: <https://barnesreview.org/product/the-myth-of-the-six-million/>
- ⁹ Barbara Kulaszka ed., *Did Six Million Really Die? Report of the Evidence in the Canadian "False News" Trial of Ernst Zundel – 1988*. Samisdat Publishers Ltd., Toronto, 1992, p. 166.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 187.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*
- ¹² *Ibid.* p. 166.
- ¹³ Deborah Lipstadt, *Denying the Holocaust*, Penguin Books, New York, N.Y., p. 104. For Lipstadt, Holocaust "denial" is all about ulterior sinister motives and in the case of pseudonyms, hiding such motives.

- ¹⁴ Harry W. Mazal, "What's in a Nym?": <http://www.holocaust-history.org/denial/nym.shtml>
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁶ Two high-profile examples include the cases of Wilhelm Stäglich and Fred Leuchter. Stäglich was stripped of his doctoral degree which he had earned at the University of Göttingen in 1951 for having written the book *Der Auschwitz Mythos*. Leuchter became unemployable in the engineering industry as well as within the prison system due to his report on the alleged execution gas chambers at Auschwitz, Birkenau and Majdanek. See: "Is There Life after Persecution?" at: http://www.ihr.org/jhr/v12/v12p429_Leuchter.html
- ¹⁷ Anonymous, "Ground Zero: The Criminalization of History." This article appears in *From the McCalden Files: Twenty Years of Revisionist Oppression*, Committee for Open Debate on the Holocaust, Visalia, Cal., 1996, p.2.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 2-3.
- ¹⁹ Ernst Gauss (Germar Rudolf) ed., *Dissecting the Holocaust: The Growing Critique of 'Truth' and 'Memory.'* Theses & Dissertations Press, Capshaw, Ala., July 2000, p. 566.
- ²⁰ A March 1982 report, "Making the Denial of the Holocaust a Crime in Law" by the Institute of Jewish Affairs in association with the World Jewish Congress called for the pan-European criminalization of revisionism. By the mid-1990s every proposal in this report had been successfully enacted or superseded by even more stringent anti-revisionist legislation.
- ²¹ Dan Gannon, "My 'Invasion' of the Computer Networks," *The Journal of Historical Review (JHR)* Vol. 15 No. 4, July / August 1995.
- ²² "Revisionist Global Computer Outreach," (*JHR*) Vol. 15, No. 4, July / August 1995.
- ²³ Germar Rudolf, *The Rudolf Report: Expert Report on Chemical and Technical Aspects of the 'Gas Chambers' of Auschwitz*. Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago, Ill, 2003, p. 338.
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*
- ²⁵ *Ibid.* For the entire story of the publication of *The Rudolf Report* and Rudolf's run-in with the German legal system, see *The Rudolf Report*, especially chapter 11, "Hunting Germar Rudolf."
- ²⁶ *Ibid.* p. 344.
- ²⁷ "Author to Be Released from Prison," *Baltimore Sun*. December 21, 2006. http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/nationworld/bal-te.hoot21dec21_0_3083828.story?track=rss
- ²⁸ Email fundraising letter in the possession of the author.
- ²⁹ "Holocaust Deniers Meet, to Outrage," *The Star Ledger*, December 13, 2006.
- ³⁰ Harry Elmer Barnes, "Revisionism and the Promotion of Peace," included in the anthology *Barnes against the Blackout: Essays against Interventionism*. Institute for Historical Review, Costa Mesa, Cal., 1991. p. 273.
- ³¹ Letter from Germar Rudolf to Israel Shamir. Unpublished.
- ³² John 8:32, New International Version.

Halfway between Reality and Myth Hitler's Ten-Year War on the Jews Reconsidered

Thomas Kues

In August 1943 the Institute of Jewish Affairs of the American/World Jewish Congress in New York published a volume entitled *Hitler's Ten-Year War on the Jews* under the editorship of a certain Boris Schub. This surveyed the treatment of the Jews in each land occupied or controlled by Germany up to the time of publication, as well as the development of the National Socialist policy towards the Jews in Germany 1933-1943. The survey is based on five categories of sources (discussed in the preface, which is dated 20 August 1943): 1) official law gazettes and decrees issued in the Axis countries; 2) official newspapers of the Axis-supervised Jewish communities; 3) first-hand reports of diplomats and foreign correspondents stationed inside Axis territory and the "informed neutral press"; 4) published and unpublished materials of the governments in exile; and 5) the underground press, "documents and letters smuggled out of occupied Europe," and "eye-witness reports when corroborated by other evidence."

The most interesting part of the book consists of the subchapters concerning the deportation of Jews from various countries, the passages on the Soviet mass evacuation of Russian Jews at the time of Operation Barbarossa, and the concluding summary. Herein we find many instances where the description of the treatment of the Jews deviates considerably from the post-war Holocaust historiography. Below I will quote extensively these passages of interest, country by country, and comment briefly on them.

Germany

On page 30, we read the following:

"Deported German Jews have been sent to various localities in the East. As the Lublin experiment was abandoned after a wave of epidemics originating from this area threatened German troops and civilians, the Polish city of Lodz became a clearing center for masses of Jewish deportees. From Lodz the Jews were distributed to different areas, such as the swamps of Pinsk, the Rokitno Marshes or to ghettos of various Polish cities. In many cases, children over 14 years have been separat-

ed from their parents and sent to the occupied Ukraine to toil in the fields. Since February 1942 German Jews have also been sent to Terezin [Theresienstadt] in the so-called Protectorate of Bohemia-Moravia and thence to Eastern Europe."

Holocaust historiography has it that the some-11,000 Reich Jews deported to Łódź were gassed in the "pure extermination camp" of Chełmno (Kulmhof). The swamps of Pinsk and the Rokitno Marshes (near Brest-Litowsk) are both in Belarus— usually they are considered parts of a larger swampy region, the Pripet Marshes. Here may be mentioned that the former German policeman Franz Osterode testified in 1965 that the commandant of the Grodno Ghetto, Heinz Errelis, had informed him, at the time of the liquidation of this ghetto (mid-February

1943), that the evacuated Grodno Jews were being sent to "special reservations" where they were to work on draining the Rokitno Marshes.¹ According to mainstream historiography these Jews were gassed in Treblinka.² Another German witness from the Grodno Trial, the former head of the Grodno customs office, Otto Tomm, testified:³

"I still recall that the Jews spoke about that they were sent from Grodno to a camp supposedly located on the border between the Bialystok district and the Generalgouvernement. From there they were then sent on elsewhere. I can no longer remember the name of this camp."

Treblinka was indeed located close to the border between the *Generalgouvernement* and the *Generalbezirk* Bialystok (which constituted an independent administrative district scheduled to be incorporated into East Prus-



Adolf Hitler, 1942. Bundesarchiv, Bild 101I-811-1881-33 / Wagner / CC-BY-SA [CC-BY-SA-3.0-de (www.creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/de/deed.en)], via Wikimedia Commons

sia and the German Reich). This indicates that at least some Jews were aware of Treblinka as a transit camp.

That Jewish schoolchildren over 14 years were sent to the Ukraine for agrarian labor was also reported in the September 1942 issue of the Swedish-Jewish journal *Judisk Krönika*.⁴ Mainstream historiography reports no transports of German Jews to the occupied Ukraine.

Poland

The survey asserts that most of the Jews left in Poland after the beginning of the Russo-German war either had died of epidemics and starvation or been murdered in extermination camps. The murder methods described (p. 149) are those found in the early underground reports:

"Hitler's orders for complete extermination required even more effective methods. German science was brought into the picture. In Chelm the gas chamber was introduced; in Belzec electrocution; in Treblinka B, death by hot steam. By July 1942, the Germans boasted an impressive record. In addition to the 400,000 dead of 'natural causes,' they had now murdered outright some 300,000 Jews."

The writers are here apparently confusing the "death camp" Chełmno with the city of Chelm. We note here that gas chambers, not "gas vans" are ascribed to this killing site.

On page 151 we read the following about the evacuation of the Warsaw Ghetto in the summer of 1942:

"The deportees were packed tight into freight trains under the usual conditions. The trains were headed mainly in the direction of the extermination camps at Treblinka, and some to Belzec and Sobibor. Only some 4,000 of the deportees were sent to work behind the front line. What happened to over 400,000 [Warsaw Jews] is now well known from detailed reports that have come out of Poland."

Then follows a recounting of the 15 November 1942 underground report on Treblinka and its "steam chambers."⁵ Interestingly the survey's description of the Warsaw Ghetto evacuation appears to be derived from an earlier version not mentioning any gas (or steam) chambers. In an article by a certain Zachariah Shuster published in the February 1943 issue of the bi-monthly *Contemporary Jewish Record* we read:⁶

"Wherever these trains stopped, dead bodies were taken from the cars. The survivors were taken to special camps at Treblinka, Belzec, and Sobibor in Eastern Poland, where the weak and ill were promptly shot."

Only strong, young people were left alive to work for the German war enterprises. However, the percentage of these was extremely small, for out of more than 250,000 'resettled' between the end of July and the end of October, only about 4,000 were sent to do auxiliary work on the battlefronts."

The number of evacuees given here is much closer to the actual figure (254,374) ⁷ compared to the survey's "over 400,000," indicating a more well-informed source. On the other hand, both versions incorrectly have it that Warsaw Jews were also sent to Bełżec and Sobibór.

The two most remarkable aspects of the Shuster version are: a) that the only murder method ascribed to Treblinka is shooting; and b) that Treblinka and the other Reinhardt camps are described as "special camps" where "the weak and ill" were shot while the strong and young were sent on to work for German war enterprises. The article nevertheless portrays Treblinka as an extermination center for the Warsaw Jews by asserting that only some 4,000 of the 250,000 evacuees were fit for labor. Even considering that at the time of the evacuation a further group of 11,315 Warsaw Jews were sent not to Treblinka but to labor camps near the city, it is completely implausible that 98.5% of the 254,374 Jews who reached the "special camp" were "weak and ill."⁸

Possibly the Shuster version is a late recounting of a now-lost tranche of early eyewitness reports that only slightly embellished upon the reality of the *Aktion* Reinhardt transit camps by exaggerating the number of deportees "unfit for transport" (*Transportunfähige*)—carriers of epidemic diseases, mentally ill, severely handicapped and dying—who almost certainly were subjected to "mercy killings" at these locations.⁹

Latvia

As for Latvia we are initially informed (p. 165) that "by 1935, there were 93,479 Jews in Latvia." Considering the demographic effects of migration to Palestine, the US etc., the population would hardly have increased by 1941. Later on, we learn (p. 169):

"During the period of Soviet occupation (June 1940 – July 1941) 34,250 Latvian citizens were deported to or fled into the interior of the Soviet Union. Altogether some 15,000 Latvian Jews now live in remote areas of Siberia and Uzbekistan under primitive conditions."

This would bring the Jewish population down to at least 78,479. According to the writers of the Institute for Jewish Affairs a considerable percentage

of the remaining Jews were then slain before German troops even reached the country (pp. 169-170):

“During the four days of chaos between the withdrawal of the Red Army and the arrival of German troops, the Latvian Radical Nationalists ruled the streets. Systematic pogroms were staged throughout the country. According to private advices reaching the United States, from 20,000 to 25,000 Jews were slain. The greatest murder of victims were in Riga, Mitau, Bauske, Dvinsk, and Kraslava.”

Accordingly some 53,479 – 58,479 Jews would have been living in Latvia in August 1941. On page 171 we learn that “according to a report transmitted through the State Department” 8,000 Jews from the Riga Ghetto were shot on 1 December 1941 and another 16,000 six days later, on 7 December. This would leave 29,479 – 34,479 people. In the book’s summary (p. 307) it is stated that an additional 3,000 Latvian Jews perished through epidemics or starvation. The number of still living Jews in 1943 is estimated at 15,000.

Lithuania

As for the evacuation of Lithuanian Jews at the outbreak of the Russo-German war we read (p. 177):

“Ten days before the outbreak of hostilities, mass arrests and deportations took place in Lithuania. Some 4,000 to 5,000 Jews along with at least 18,246 Lithuanians were deported to the Soviet Union. In the first days of Russo-German hostilities, several hundred others were evacuated together with Soviet officials. A few thousand fled. About 5,000 Polish-Jewish refugees had succeeded earlier in leaving for the United States, Palestine and Shanghai. The German advance in the Baltic area was so swift that there was no time for any substantial exodus of refugees to the Russian interior.”

Here it should be mentioned that much higher numbers were reported by the Jewish as well as German press. In November 1941 the Swedish-Jewish journal *Judisk Krönika* stated that 50,000 Lithuanian Jews had been evacuated first to the Russian interior and then to Russian Mongolia.¹⁰ According to the same journal, the *Deutsche Zeitung im Ostland* reported sometime in late 1941 or early 1942 that 30,000 Lithuanian Jews had been evacuated by the Soviets.¹¹

The writers are unaware of any large-scale massacres of Lithuanian Jews during 1941, despite the fact that the so-called Jäger Report would

have it that some 130,000 Lithuanian Jews were murdered before the end of that year. Instead we find reiterated the completely fictitious story of a massacre of 60,000 Vilnius Jews in May 1942, which I have discussed elsewhere.¹² It is also alleged at the end of the chapter on Lithuania that many foreign Jews were brought to Kovno (Kaunas) to be murdered there (p. 181):

“In the spring of 1943, a German paper admitted the ‘evacuation’ of the Jewish ghetto in Vilnius. The same frightful reports come from Kaunas, where there is said to be a Vernichtungsstelle (extermination center), in which Jews deported from Central and Western Europe are methodically murdered.”

According to Holocaust historians only two transports of foreign Jews reached Lithuania: one convoy departing from Berlin on 17 November 1941 and another departing from Vienna on 23 November 1941. Based on the so-called Jäger Report, mainstream historiography asserts that these Jews upon arrival were brought to Kovno’s Ninth Fort and murdered there. It would have been possible, though they were in fact transferred later to Vilnius. On 12 March 1942 Herman Kruk noted in his diary that 2,000 Jews, most of them from Vienna, had been brought to the public housing on Subocz Street in Vilnius.¹³ Mainstream historians do not acknowledge any transports of Jews from Western Europe to Lithuania except for a small transport of French Jews in May 1944, *i.e.* a year after the publication of the reviewed volume.

Occupied Parts of the Soviet Union

The most interesting part of the chapter on the Jews in the German-occupied parts of the Soviet Union (including Belarus and the Ukraine but not the Baltic States) concerns the mass evacuations of civilians carried out by the retreating Soviets. On page 185 we find a table with data on the number of evacuees for various Ukrainian cities:

City	Pre-war pop.	Pop. after evacuation	Source
Kiev	846.293	304.570	<i>Izvestia</i> , 14 Oct 1942
Odessa	604.000	300.000	<i>Novoye Slovo</i> , Berlin, 22 July 1942
Dniepropetrovsk	500.622	151.923	<i>Novoye Slovo</i> 7 Jan 1942
Kherson	97.000	61.000	<i>Deutsche Ukraine Zeitung</i> 10 July 1942
Nikolaev	167.000	100.000	<i>New York Herald Tribune</i> 26 Oct 1941
Mariupol	270.000	178.358	<i>Novoye Slovo</i> 7 Jan 1942
Vinnitsa	93.000	40.000	<i>Deutsche Ukraine Zeitung</i> 7 Oct 1942
Smolensk	156.000	20.000	<i>Soviet War News</i> , 7 Sept 1942
Poltava	130.305	75.000	<i>Kölnische Zeitung</i> , 6 June 1943

Then follows a discussion of the evacuations which is well worth quoting more or less in full (pp. 186-187):

"After the first Blitz period, particularly in the larger cities, there was time enough to evacuate the civilian population. The gates of Kiev, for instance, were reached by the German armies on August 8, 1941, but the city was not taken until September 20th; Odessa was assaulted on August 13th and occupied on October 16th; the Smolensk outskirts were reached on July 17th, but the city was not entirely in German hands until August 13th. In each case there was a delay during which time it was possible to carry out the evacuation of civilians.

In numerous cities and towns, particularly in the Ukraine and White Russia, Jews were among the first to be evacuated. A correspondent of the Budapest Pester Lloyd, who in the fall of 1941 visited Baranowicz and Novograd-Volynsk, two towns which before the German invasion were largely inhabited by Jews, stated that 90 percent of the local inhabitants had escaped with the retreating Soviet forces. The German-controlled Ukrainian Krakivski Visti asserted that in October 1941 in Zhitomir, of a former Jewish population of 50,000, some 44,000 (88 percent) had gone with the Russian troops, and that a similar exodus of Jews had taken place in many other German-occupied towns of the Ukraine. In Kiev, practically the entire Jewish youth left the city together with the Soviet army. Only elderly people remained behind. According to Kube, German General Commissar for White Russia, all but a few thousand of the 80,000 Jews in the Minsk area fled to the interior of Soviet Russia at the time of the German invasion. The Soviet authorities were also able to evacuate 76,000 from the Vitebsk area. [...] Nevertheless, the assertion of the Soviet Jewish writer, David Bergelson, that 80 percent of the Jews in German-held Soviet cities were evacuated in good time is considerably exaggerated. [...] In most cases, it was only the younger people who were able to escape. Older people who were more difficult to transplant, and those who would not be of use in defense work, or answer Soviet military needs, were usually left behind."

As destinations of the evacuated Jews, the Saratov district, Uzbekistan and Bashkir are mentioned (pp. 187-188). In the latter, "many thousands of Jewish families evacuated from the Ukraine and the Minsk district were absorbed." In the summary we find that the surveyors have estimated the number of evacuated Soviet Jews at 1,200,000.¹⁴

The description of the German treatment of the Russian Jews is rather vague and incongruent. First we learn (p. 189) that

“Despite much confused and misleading information concerning the Jews in the Axis-held Soviet area, it is clear that the German forces came armed with detailed instructions as to how the local civilian population was to be handled.”

One wonders what exactly this “confused and misleading information” had to say. In any case it is not described further. We then go on to read (p. 190):

“The German policy towards the Jews seemed to differ from one locality to another. [...] The German anti-Jewish policy for the occupied Soviet territories lacked uniformity of design, but not of purpose, and thus despite the apparent lack of system, its characteristic forms emerged.”

The alleged “purpose” was, needless to say, “extermination.” A large number of (alleged) massacres (including Babi Yar) are mentioned, the sources mainly being Soviet propaganda publications. We learn, however, that the Germans also used huge numbers of Russian as well as Lithuanian Jews for forced labor (p. 191):

“According to a report published in the Stockholm press in October 1941, about 200,000 Soviet Jewish citizens were drafted into forced labor battalions, and set to work repairing the war damage in occupied Soviet territory. [...] Some 150,000 Jews captured in White Russia and the Vilnius region were forced to work from sunrise to sunset on the rebuilding of the Vilnius-Minsk railway, adjusting the tracks to the narrower German gauge.”

Did these work commandos perhaps include some of the Lithuanian Jews evacuated from Vilnius who according to mainstream historiography were murdered by the *Einsatzgruppen*?

Finally, we read (pp. 192-193):

“By the summer of 1942, the devastated and scorched earth areas along the shifting Russo-German front had become the destination for tens of thousands of Jews deported from the ghettos of Poland and other German-occupied countries, as well as from the satellite states. At the end of 1942, some 10,000 Hungarian Jews were working in labor battalions on the Soviet front.”

While the use of Hungarian Jews by the Hungarian army at the front is perfunctorily known and acknowledged by orthodox historians, they know nothing of transports of Polish and other Jews to the frontlines. As I have mentioned elsewhere,¹⁵ the Vilnius Jew Herman Kruk encountered a

transport of Jews from Upper Silesia bound for the front as early as 30 January 1942.

Regarding the living conditions of the Jews deported to the front we read (pp. 193f):

“According to an eyewitness who succeeded in escaping to Switzerland, the Jews brought to the Soviet-German front area were asked by the German authorities whether they felt able to work. Those who declared that they could not were separated from the rest, and, according to information received from a German officer, they were all put to death. The men fit for work were brought to a region not very far from the Stalingrad battle lines. There they were quartered in barracks and given overalls in the style and color of the Todt organization, but without the Swastika ringlet. Bunks in the crowded barracks were arranged in tiers of three.

Ten hours a day, the men carried heavy bags of cement weighing more than a hundred pounds. Only one Sunday in five was a day of rest. Workers received one-half pound of bread per day, and in the morning a dark liquid sweetened with saccharine called coffee. At noon and in the evening, they were given some hot soup. After a few days under these conditions many were unable to continue. Nevertheless, they were driven hard by the overseers and forced to complete their quota of work. Those who could not continue were put to death, according to the testimony of a Bavarian officer.”

Unfortunately, no references are given for these accounts.

Holland

The Jews deported in the “tens of thousands” to the eastern front lines apparently included Dutch Jews, for on page 241 we read:

“The horrible conditions of transport similar to those applied elsewhere are proof enough that extermination rather than labor is the real goal. Packed into cattle trains, stripped of all belongings with the exception of a tiny bundle of indispensable articles, Jews are shipped somewhere to the East. Thousands die on the way, victims of inhuman conditions, no air, no space, no food. On reaching the German frontier, many older men and women are shot because they are considered useless.”

According to mainstream historiography, not a single transport of Dutch Jews ever reached the Occupied Eastern Territories. The book mentions (p.

242) reports of “mass executions of Dutch Jews in Poland,” but here is not the talk of mass gassings at Auschwitz or Sobibór, but of smaller massacres at various locations (p. 242):

“At Tursk, 150 Dutch Jews were mowed down by machine-gun fire and the village itself burned to the ground. Similar massacres were said to be staged in Sochy, Potok and a number of other Polish localities.”

Belgium

On page 254 we find the following passage concerning the deportations from Belgium:

“The last chapter in Belgium, as elsewhere, is deportation to [an] ‘unknown destination.’ In March 1942 several reports referred to a transport including 10,000 Belgian Jews which had arrived in Lodz, where they were to work in textile factories turning out uniforms for the German army. Later there were reports that among the victims of massacres in the Baltic States, were hundreds of deported Belgian Jews. Towards the end of July, information filtered through concerning 100 Jews who, after having been confined in the prison of St. Gilles-lez-Brussels, were deported to Eastern Europe. In August, the arrival in Cracow of freight trains with somewhere between 600 and 1850 Jews from Brussels or Antwerp was reported.”

That 10,000 Jews had been sent from Antwerp to Łódź appears to have been originally reported by the Belgian government-in-exile.¹⁶ This supposed deportation was also mentioned by demographer E.M. Kulischer.¹⁷ Mainstream historiography is unaware of it, and there exists no documentary evidence confirming it.

The Summary

The summary of the volume opens with the following conclusion (p. 300):

“Some 3,000,000 Jews of Europe have perished since the war began four years ago. In the areas occupied or dominated by the Axis, there now remain a little over 3,300,000 Jews, compared to the former Jewish population of 8,300,000. Some 1,800,000 have been evacuated into the interior of the Soviet Union, and about 180,000 have emigrated. But 3,000,000 are dead. They have been destroyed by deliberate means: by planned starvation, forced labor, deportation, pogrom and methodical murder in the German-run extermination centers of Eastern Europe.”

Reading this one could assume that the statistical picture of the Jewish catastrophe painted by the surveyors is roughly congruent with later Holocaust historiography as far as the victim numbers and their distribution are concerned. After all, more than a year of Holocaust still remained at the time of publication. However, if we proceed to the table entitled “How They Died” at the end of this chapter (p. 307), we encounter some real surprises:

Country	Total Dead	Organized Murder	Deportation	Starvation/Epidemics	Killed in Warfare
Germany	110,000	15,000	75,000	20,000	-
Poland	1,600,000	1,000,000	-	500,000	100,000
USSR	650,000	375,000	-	150,000	125,000
Lithuania	105,000	100,000	-	5000	-
Latvia	65,000	62,000	-	3,000	-
Austria	19,500	1,500	10,500	7,500	-
Rumania	227,500	125,000	92,500	10,000	-
Yugoslavia	35,000	15,000	12,000	5,000	3,000
Greece	18,500	2,000	8,500	6,000	2,000
Belgium	30,000	-	25,000	5,000	-
Holland	45,000	-	40,000	5,000	-
France	56,000	2,000	34,000	15,000	5,000
Czechoslovakia:	64,500	2,000	47,500	15,000	-
a) Protectorate	27,000	2,000	15,000	10,000	-
b) Slovakia	37,500	-	32,500	5,000	-
Danzig	250	-	250	-	-
Estonia	3000	3,000	-	-	-
Norway	800	-	600	200	-
Total:	3,030,050	1,702,500	354,850	746,700	235,000

We first note here that the number of *Einsatzgruppen* victims (= “Organized Murder” for USSR + the Baltic States) is no higher than 540,000, as compared to the 2,200,000 later alleged by German Holocaust historians Krausnick and Wilhelm.¹⁸ By August 1943 at least 90% of the alleged *Einsatzgruppen* massacres had already taken place.

Secondly, we are more than a little surprised to see that, according to the Institute of Jewish Affairs, not a single Belgian or Dutch Jew and only 2000 French Jews had fallen victim to “Organized Murder” up until August 1943—this despite that Holocaust historiography has it that 15,700

Belgian Jews were gassed in Auschwitz, some 70,000 Dutch Jews in Auschwitz and Sobibór, and 32,245 French Jews in the same two camps, making for a total of approximately 118,000 alleged victims.

Could “Deportation” in this table be synonymous with killings in “extermination camps”? The answer is clearly no, for in the explanatory notes to the table we read (p. 308):

“One-half of the deportees are reckoned as victims. This column lists the victims only. The official German figures admit that up to 30 percent of the deportees die en route (Report of Obersturmführer Hiegs to Himmler). The conditions at the place of destination are deliberately aimed to make survival difficult. Some twenty percent of the deportees who arrive at their destination should be reckoned as victims.”

Thus a leading Jewish institution still maintained in August 1943 that these French, Belgian and Dutch Jews were not murdered en masse, but simply deported to either Poland or the Occupied Eastern Territories, including the Soviet-German front lines. The Jews of Germany, Austria and the Protectorate were also not thought to have been murdered en masse in “death camps.” The figures for “organized murder” pertaining to these countries, we read on page 308, “refers to victims in concentration camps, mercy killings, and suicides after 1939.”

This writer has found no German report on the percentage of en route deaths, or for that matter any mention of an “Obersturmführer Hiegs.” However, even if we assume that this report exists and that its contents are correctly recounted, a death rate of up to 30% does not mean that 30% of all deportees perished on the way to their destination in the East, only that the en route mortality in some transports may have reached that terrible rate.¹⁹

Interesting in this context is what we read in an editor’s footnote to the Warsaw Jew Abraham Levin’s ghetto diary:²⁰

“[Jewish historian and Warsaw Ghetto chronicler Emmanuel] Ringelblum also writes on 1 Jan. 1943: ‘Lies in an article in [the SS periodical] Das Schwarze Korps about how the transfer of Polish Jewry failed—it seems that Jews are not suitable human material for resettlement, so 120,000 children, women and old people died. So that was the end of the deportation. The forced removal was imposed only on the non-productive elements of the Jewish population.’ (Kvosim, II, p. 75).”

The Korherr Report together with the Höfle document shows that a total of 1,419,467 Jews were transited via the Aktion Reinhardt camps and Chelmo up until the end of 1942. At least some 1,200,000 of these were of

Polish nationality.²¹ Assuming that 120,000 Polish Jews indeed died en route to or from these camps it would mean a mortality of 10%, not 30%. It is generally accepted, though, that most of the Jewish transports from Western Europe were carried out under conditions that were relatively humane compared to those of the transports from Poland²², something which would naturally lead to fewer en route deaths.

The reviewer has looked through the December 1942 issues of *Das Schwarze Korps* without finding an article corresponding to Ringelblum's description.

The idea that, whereas the Polish Jews were murdered in "extermination centers," the Jews of Western and Central Europe were simply deported east is echoed in the Vilnius Jew Herman Kruk's diary entry from 19 April 1943:²³

"The Jews of Warsaw are being taken to be killed in Malkinia, near Lviv or near Zamość. The Jews from Western Europe are being taken east, their wanderings go on."

Kruk, however, did not believe that the Łódź Jews had been gassed at Chełmno, as he himself had met two of the Jews deported from that city in Vilnius, to where they had escaped from a labor camp.²⁴ Polish Jews would of course easily have blended into most of the occupied Soviet territories, as they belonged to the same cultural sphere and spoke Yiddish. Moreover, a relatively large number of Polish Jews, most of them from eastern Poland, had fled to Belarus (and to a lesser extent to Lithuania) after 1939. In the summer of 1941, some of them were not evacuated by the Soviets but remained behind and became ghetto and camp inmates. The presence of Polish Jews on occupied Soviet territory would thus arouse little attention. On the other hand, as I have shown in my ongoing INCONVENIENT HISTORY article series "Evidence for the Presence of 'Gassed' Jews in the Occupied Eastern Territories" (begins on Page 223 of this volume), there appeared frequently during 1942-1944 reports about Jews from Western and Central Europe being transported to the "*besetzte Ostgebiete*," especially to Latvia, Lithuania, Belarus and Transnistria. Clearly the experts of the World Jewish Congress found these reports reliable. It appears that the idea of Western Jews being gassed en masse in the "death camps" was adopted on a broad front only in the summer or early autumn of 1944, around the time that the Red Army overran the Majdanek Camp. As late as in May 1944 the aforementioned *Judisk Krönika* reported that 25,000 Western Jews were present in Vilnius, Lithuania.²⁵

A final note on the summary: Of the 100,000 Polish Jews listed as “killed in warfare,” “63,000 Jews perished in air raids and artillery bombardment during the war,” 37,000 were killed in action, 32,000 of them during the first three weeks of the war, the other 5,000 perished later as guerillas (p. 308).

Conclusion

The same year that *Hitler's Ten-Year War on the Jews* was published by the American chapter of the World Jewish Congress, the International Labour Office in Montreal, Canada, published a study by the Jewish demographics professor Eugene M. Kulischer entitled “The Displacement of Population in Europe.”²⁶ As in the WJC survey, the deported Western Jews are described by Kulischer as being sent, not to certain death in “extermination centres,” but to “the ghettos and labour camps in the German-occupied Eastern Territories.”²⁷ Kulischer, however, had not succumbed to the black propaganda concerning “gas chambers,” “steam chambers” and “electrocution,” but instead maintained that “hundreds of thousands” of Polish Jews from the *Generalgouvernement*, including those evacuated from Warsaw, were also deported further east.²⁸ The writers of the Institute of Jewish Affairs²⁹, unlike Kulischer, probably felt an onus to produce a book which fit more or less with the war propaganda against Hitler's Germany that was being disseminated at the time by their superiors in the WJC, or which at least did not run counter to it. The result was a volume which delivers many interesting insights into the evolution of the Holocaust propaganda at a stage halfway between exaggerated reality and myth.

Notes

- ¹ Statement by Franz Osterode on 14 October 1965, reproduced in: Serge Klarsfeld, *Documents Concerning the Destruction of the Jews of Grodno, 1941-1944*. Vol. 2, Accounts by German witnesses or perpetrators of the final solution, Beate Klarsfeld Foundation, New York 1985, pp. 214-215.
- ² Yitzhak Arad, *Belzec. Sobibor, Treblinka. The Operation Reinhard Death Camps*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington/Indianapolis 1987, p. 396.
- ³ Statement by Otto Tamm in Cologne on 21 October 1965, reproduced in: S. Klarsfeld, *Documents Concerning the Destruction of the Jews of Grodno, 1941-1944*. Vol. 2, *op. cit.*, p. 264.
- ⁴ *Judisk Krönika*, vol. 11, no. 7, September 1942, p. 91.
- ⁵ Cf. Jürgen Graf, Carlo Mattogno, *Treblinka. Extermination Camp or Transit Camp?*, Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago 2004, pp. 51f.
- ⁶ Zachariah Shuster, “The Passion of a People: Anno MCMXLII,” *Contemporary Jewish Record*, vol. 6, no. 1 (February 1943), p. 26.

- ⁷ An article in the exile-Polish press (“Alle Juden raus!,” *Wiadomosci Polskie*, Nr. 45, London, 7 October 1943) states that “according to German sources” a total of 254,374 Warsaw Jews had been “resettled.” According to the files of the Warsaw Jewish Council a total of 251,545 Jews were evacuated between 22 July and 12 September (cf. J. Graf, C. Mattogno, *Treblinka. Extermination Camp or Transit Camp?*, *op. cit.*, pp. 275f). This figure does not include a further transport of 2,196 Warsaw Jews on 21 September, which is mentioned in the Polish article. If we add this transport to the figure of the Jewish Council we get 253,741, which differs from the reported German figure by merely 633. This difference is likely due to the Germans making smaller last-minute additions to some of the transports.
- ⁸ Cf. J. Graf, C. Mattogno, *Treblinka. Extermination Camp or Transit Camp?*, *op. cit.*, p. 276.
- ⁹ Cf. Jürgen Graf, Thomas Kues, Carlo Mattogno, *Sobibór. Holocaust Propaganda and Reality*, TBR Books, Washington D.C. 2010, p. 269ff.
- ¹⁰ *Judisk Krönika*, vol. 10 no. 9 (November 1941), p. 141
- ¹¹ *Judisk Krönika*, vol. 11, no. 1 (January-February 1942), p. 12.
- ¹² Thomas Kues, “News Notices Relating to the *Einsatzgruppen* and the ‘Holocaust’ in the Soviet Union from *Judisk Krönika*,” online: <https://codoh.com/library/document/news-notice-relating-to-the-einsatzgruppen-and/>
- ¹³ Thomas Kues, “Evidence for the Presence of ‘Gassed’ Jews in the Occupied Eastern Territories, Part 1,” Section 3.3.1., *Inconvenient History*, vol. 2, no 2 (Summer 2010), page 244 of this volume.
- ¹⁴ 1,850,000 (“Gross Loss” in Table II “Analysis of Deficit by Countries” on p. 305) minus 650,000 (“Total Deaths” in Table III “How They Died” on p. 307).
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁶ Cf. “Strategy of Decimation: *Black Book: The Nazi Crime against the Jewish People*, New York 1946,” online: <https://codoh.com/library/document/strategy-of-decimation/>
- ¹⁷ E.M. Kulischer, “The Displacement of Population in Europe, International Labour Office,” Montreal 1943, p. 104.
- ¹⁸ H. Krausnick, H.H. Wilhelm, *Die Truppe des Weltanschauungskrieges*, Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, Stuttgart 1981, p. 621.
- ¹⁹ One may recall here the tragic transport from the Galician town of Kolomea on 14 September 1942, during which 2,000 out of 8,200 deportees (*i.e.* 24%) perished on the way to Belżec; cf. Carlo Mattogno, *Belżec in Propaganda, Testimonies, Archeological Research, and History*, Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago 2004, p. 100.
- ²⁰ Abraham Lewin, *A Cup of Tears. A Diary of the Warsaw Ghetto*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford 1988, p. 298, note 430.
- ²¹ Cf. J. Graf, T. Kues, C. Mattogno, *Sobibór. Holocaust Propaganda and Reality*, *op. cit.* pp. 349-352.
- ²² Jules Schelvis, *Sobibór. A History of a Nazi Death Camp*, Berg, Oxford/New York 2007, p. 49f.
- ²³ T. Kues, “Evidence for the Presence of ‘Gassed’ Jews in the Occupied Eastern Territories, Part 1,” Section 3.3.1., *op. cit.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *Judisk Krönika*, vol. 13, no. 5, May/June 1944, p. 68.

²⁶ E.M. Kulischer, "The Displacement of Population in Europe," International Labour Office, Montreal 1943.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 111.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 111, 113.

²⁹ The preface informs us that Gerhard Jacoby wrote the chapter on Germany, Joseph Schechtmann the one on the Soviet Union, Max M. Laserson the one on Latvia, and Maria Schwarz the ones on Holland and Poland. The writers responsible for the chapters on Belgium and Lithuania are not named.

Joe Sobran (1946-2010)

Relegated Champion

Jett Rucker

“Revisionism” is somewhat of a misnomer—or is incomplete in its implications, at any rate. The term denotes a process of correction through change—in this case, of the historical record. But in most of the cases published in this journal, it implies much more. It implies a correction of popular error, a sailing against the wind of Napoleon’s acid and all-too-true definition of history as “Lies agreed upon.” By definition, the content of revisionism is opposed not only by popular belief, but by power elites whose dominance and ease depend upon the continuance of the popular belief. With no fear of usurping the existing terminology, I’ll submit “Retrospective dissent” as a better description.

This means, in turn, that every revisionist who publishes his revision under his own name becomes, in doing so, a martyr. Rarely, nowadays, does it seem to cost the revisionist’s physical life, but it often costs not only career and reputation, but even to some extent his health, perhaps even his marriage or familial relations.

Some revisionists, perhaps the more fortunate, plunge into the tempest of revisionism with seemingly little to lose. Generally of the younger sort, these stalwarts offer up on the altar of revisionism only brilliant careers still unborn, domestic bliss still only within their dreams. Others experience the opening of their eyes only as wisdom unfolds with age. These, talented and rigorously honest souls to a man (and woman), always—by my definition—have respected professional reputations, devoted families and/or circles of friends, in some cases wide public followings, even high incomes and perhaps the beginnings of wealth. And these, they consign, if not willingly, then still knowingly, to smoke in the flames that burn eternally, like those of Hell, to consume those who would defy the status quo in the defense of truth.

Such a one was Michael Joseph Sobran, in 1991 arguably the best writer in the stable of brilliant writers assembled by William F. Buckley to fill the pages of his *National Review* magazine with the most-glittering, high-impact, and influential prose ever to be associated with the word “conservative.” And it was around 1991, with the launching of the First Gulf War, that Joe Sobran began his long, tortuous descent from the pinnacle of

Conservative approbation, influence, income, and security he had attained under the banner of the *National Review* and its charismatic founder and leader, William F. Buckley. Sobran set out on this course by opposing the First Gulf War and sealed his fate by pointing out that the interests and influence of Israel were critical in propelling the US along the path to this and subsequent wars.

Buckley was not the cause of Joe Sobran's undoing—he was the agent of it. Sobran's undoing was designed and compelled by the agents of Israel, chiefly *New Republic* Editor Norman Podhoretz and his wife Midge Decter. These dropped on Sobran the atomic bomb of Zionist opprobrium: they said he was anti-Semitic. Worse, they eventually bullied Buckley into confirming their scurrilous charge.

Joe Sobran would have none of it. Besides holding to his initial position without the merest hint of cavil or mitigation, he fired back at his attackers with devastating revelations of their warmongering, imperial, genocidal motivations. Buckley won the fight the only way he could: he fired Sobran in 1993.

As Sobran inquired further into Israeli atrocities and the historical/moral/biblical claims made by Israel's apologists to somehow expiate these atrocities, his attention was drawn to the tortured history of the "Holocaust" of 1933-1945. He eventually found sympathy with, and from, the Institute for Historical Review and its director, Historian Mark Weber. A writer (and eloquent speaker, as Sobran was) must have an audience. Seldom is a writer's audience composed entirely of people who are as glittering, glamorous, wealthy, stylish, or admired as one might possibly wish. And when a purveyor of thoughts and ideas such as Sobran finds audiences that welcome him, the purveyor naturally and instinctively inflects his milieu in the direction of their interests. Even Elie Wiesel began to write in French when the Yiddish vein he had been mining petered out.

Thus it was that, after his split with the *National Review*, Joe Sobran bestowed progressively more of his genius on two worthy recipients: Catholicism, and opposing the hijacking of American hearts and minds by Zionists.

Where the two of these intersected most-trenchantly, was hatred.

Joe Sobran was the nemesis of hatred. In his columns, he wrestled this devil *mano a mano*, and he beat it every time. Perhaps the profane charges of anti-Semitism made him take Old Scratch on so frontally and so devastatingly. Consider the wisdom displayed in a quip he made in his section of William F. Buckley's *In Search of Anti-Semitism*, the book in which Buckley's abandonment of the last pretense of conservative idealism became

finally and indisputably visible to all: “The term anti-Semite used to refer to a person who hates Jews. Today, an anti-Semite is a person who is hated by Jews.”

Like Lord Acton and Murray Rothbard, Joe Sobran grew more radical as he got older. He was, in fact, a devoted follower of Murray Rothbard, eventually pronouncing himself a “reluctant anarchist.” Rothbard may even have influenced Sobran’s seminal thinking about anti-Semitism and hatred. The Profile of Murray Rothbard in the online Fall 2010 issue of *Inconvenient History* (Page 450 of this volume) included a link to his 1990 essay, “Pat Buchanan and the Menace of Anti-anti-Semitism.” Buchanan, of course, was a victim of Buckley concurrently with Sobran, and Buckley figures into Rothbard’s essay extensively.

Sobran’s own magnum opus on the subject was “The Uses of Hate,” (<http://tinyurl.com/2458jxd>) in which he delivered some startling insights on the subject of hatred—particularly the hatred of groups that so obsesses a certain kind of pundit on such notions. “Despite all the rhetoric of bigotry that assails us these days, it just isn’t that easy to hate indiscriminately. In fact such hatred seems unnatural — or, if you prefer, idiosyncratic.” He continues to remind us of what we know perfectly well—despite the illusory pronouncements of the aforementioned pundits—that hatred is an emotion felt against specific, known (or perhaps not-well-understood) persons, and not against groups of persons with whom the would-be hater is not personally acquainted. Of course, it is not only possible, but frequently attempted, to express, even to encourage, hatred of just such persons—unknown, but such attitudes are at best abstractions, and more-often sheer incitements, to which the human soul ultimately cannot faithfully attach itself. Even Hitler famously arranged for the unmolested emigration of the Jewish doctor who had attended him and his mother in Linz, Austria—the same doctor who characterized the juvenile Adolf as in all ways respectful, polite, and devoted to his mother in a way most-difficult to reconcile with the images subsequently disseminated of the soulless monster Adolf Hitler.

Joe Sobran—like the rest of us continually inundated by incitements to hatred perversely clothed in the trappings of opposition to just such hatred—saw through the entire travesty, and delivered to those of us who would receive it these critical insights. For this, the intellectual powers that be excoriated him mercilessly.

And such are those powers, to the everlasting detriment not only of Joe Sobran, but of you, and me, and of peace and brotherhood quite as well. Joe Sobran resisted them—eloquently, resolutely, politely, and with unas-

sailable recourse, time and again, to fact and reason. And he did so with indomitable courage and heedlessness to his own welfare.

In doing this, his life and works pose a challenge to each of us. To bear witness, yes. To do so eloquently, loudly—even, as it may be, offensively to many, yes. To do so resolutely and fearlessly, yes. But above all, to do so confident in the truth and virtue of what we do, and ultimately, in the irresistible need for it to be done.

COMMENT

Never Again – What?

Jett Rucker

Germany, October 1938. It's almost kick-off time for the Holocaust, which most of its fans date from the night of November 9, the infamous *Kristallnacht* "national pogrom" against Jewish synagogues, shops, and some homes. But less well known among devotees of the lore of *Kristallnacht* is the chain of events that was initiated by ... Poland.

Upon the annexation of Austria by (Nazi) Germany, Poland's government took alarm at the prospect that many of the Polish Jews then living in Vienna would flee the Nazis and return to their country of origin. The Sejm passed a law in March 1938 providing that the citizenship of expatriate Poles would lapse when they had been outside Poland for five years continuously. A return to Poland would suffice to "start the clock" over again. On October 6, the Polish government announced that this law would take effect (retrospectively) on October 29. There were at the time some 56,000 Polish Jews in the German Reich (see <http://tinyurl.com/33xz53h>).

By October 28, the German police had rounded up some 18,000 of these Polish Jews then residing within Germany's borders and transported them to the border with Poland, for them to return to Poland. But the Poles refused to allow these holders of Polish passports freedom of movement within Poland, instantly giving rise to refugee camps along the German-Polish border at several locations, most-notably at a small village known as Zbaszyn (<http://tinyurl.com/2auztrt>). These first concentration camps for Jews were Polish, not German. Poles imprisoned Polish Jews in Poland.

Flash forward, now, to 2010, to France, a member, with Romania and Bulgaria since 2007, of the European Union. The 300 or more encampments are in France, and they contain Romas (gypsies), most of whom hold Romanian and Bulgarian passports. They aren't confined in the camps, except to the extent that they would be charged fees to establish their customary mobile dwellings (trailers, or "caravans") elsewhere in facilities designed and licensed for such use. One reason such fees are so onerous for them is that French law still prohibits most employment to Romanians and Bulgarians, despite their citizens' right to travel and live in France under provisions of the EU, and French employers are in most cases appar-

ently averse to employing Roma in any case (as are Bulgarian and Romanian employers, too).

Pursuant to publicized policies of the Ministry of the Interior, French authorities have launched a campaign to clear the camps of their occupants and persuade them to return to the countries of their origin. In scenes reminiscent of the famous Israeli use of bulldozers on Bedouin settlements, the French authorities have razed and removed whatever remains of illegal Roma encampments after their evacuation.

While both the 1938 and 2010 actions involve use of the police for the inevitable recalcitrants, France employs a device not known to have been used by their German predecessors: they *pay* the Roma to return to their places of legal domicile—the €300 per adult evidently suffices to provide some incentive, along with a free ride in a passenger jet rather than a train. Fear does the rest, according to some Roma who have taken the money, returned to the east, and wish now to resume residence in France. For their part, Romania and Bulgaria do not appear to use force to retain returning Roma in any particular place(s), although accusations by Amnesty International suggest that oppression may be more palpable on those returning to Kosovo, most of whom come from Germany (<http://tinyurl.com/33x6puu>).

Another of the many differences between the situation this century vis-à-vis the previous is that while the Nazi regime in Germany no doubt sought at least occasionally to please German constituencies, the regime of Nicolas Sarkozy in France remains subject to fairly open and free elections (in which, as it happens, such Roma as are in France at the time are completely entitled to vote). Regardless of whether the Nazis' actions of 72 years ago were popular with most Germans, the French enterprise is necessarily aimed at bolstering the electoral fortunes of the party now in power.

Sarkozy himself is the child of a Hungarian father and a mother of Jewish descent. In Hungary quite recently, following on the recent passage of a law criminalizing "Holocaust denial," a further law criminalizing the denial of Roma criminality (no, that is not a typo—see <http://tinyurl.com/2gyqsf9>) has been proposed before the national legislature. In any case, Jews and Roma were concurrently rounded up, deported, and put in many of the very same concentration camps by the Germans in the twentieth century. While this might be seen as giving the two groups common cause, or cause for hatred of Germans, it has turned out more to occasion competition between the two groups for the spoils of retribution—mention in monuments to atrocities, reparations payments, and the like.

As yet, the Roma have not chosen any territory anywhere to serve them as their "ancestral homeland," as the Jews did Israel. How about Bangla-

desh? Bangladesh is quite as uninhabited today as Palestine was in the years before 1948, and the Roma genotype indicates origins in that sparsely populated region.

European Union Justice Commissioner Viviane Reding availed herself of the rich trove of the Nazi legacy in comparing the expulsions of Roma with the wartime deportation of Jews by Nazi-puppet Vichy France to concentration camps, neglecting to note that these deportations were not of French Jews but of Jewish refugees from Germany and countries further east that the Germans at that time occupied. In this, the deportations bore a closer resemblance to the Twenty-First-Century campaign, but their intended destinations were explicitly German-run concentration camps, rather than the mere repatriation intended by the Germans in 1938 and the French in 2010. Reding's analogy is apt, but the 1938 instance compares more closely.

And the analogy with what in retrospect has been characterized as the beginning of the Holocaust is close indeed. Is a reprise of the Holocaust—whatever it actually was—at hand, in some of the same countries, this time with victims whose resemblance to the Jews of 1938 goes little further than their tending not to interbreed with their non-Roma neighbors? While critics of the Jews tended to cite their sharp practices in business, in some cases actual crime—but always white-collar crime—critics of the Roma tend to cite their thievery and propensity to burglarize. Neither group has received much accusation of violence, but while the Roma arouse distaste with their apparent poverty, Jews tended to arouse envy in Germany and elsewhere because of their apparent prosperity. Above all, the Jews had wealthy and influential contingents in rich and powerful countries like the United Kingdom, the United States and, yes, France, to take up cries such as “JUDEA DECLARES WAR ON GERMANY” with which to threaten the Nazis as soon as they took power in 1933.

Is it time now for Judea to declare war on France? The main organization so far to take up the cause of the Roma is Amnesty International, an organization in very bad odor with Zionists in recent years for its similar work on behalf of the Palestinian victims of Israel.

Meantime, the world today enjoys an abundance of well-funded (and well-connected) organizations such as the Simon Wiesenthal Center that have dedicated themselves, in many cases in as many words, to “never again” a genocide such as they allege befell the Jews (and only the Jews) at the hands of the Nazis in the 1940s. Have we heard from any of these outfits? I am unable to fetch up reports of any such “speaking up” for the Romas, despite the fact that one of the perpetrators of atrocities against them

is their old bugbear, Germany. Abe Foxman, where are you when members of some other tribe might have need of your critical pronouncements? Are you too preoccupied with zoning disputes in lower Manhattan these days to see a new Holocaust looming on the horizon? What about Elie Wiesel? He says he's from Romania, and France is where he finally hit the big time. Has he now lapsed back into the silence he's written and said so much about?

Perhaps we should consider the never-spoken words that may come after the familiar incantation, "never again" as we hear it from the many Jewish organizations that mouth it while seeking donations. Never again, *what*? Never again a genocide directed against Jews? Never again a law disadvantaging Jews? Never again a private act unfavorable to any Jew, anywhere? Never again a public word, by anyone, anywhere, that might in some way be interpreted unflatteringly as to anyone who might be or have been a Jew?

We need to think about what follows "never again," and to consider what that implies regarding the claim it makes upon our consciences, the sweat of our brows, and the blood of our youth.

Especially given that, based on what can be observed to this moment, it applies only to the Chosen of God, and to no one else, however much their situation may otherwise be the same.

REVIEW

Deathride: Hitler vs. Stalin.

The Eastern Front, 1941-1945

reviewed by Joseph Bishop

Deathride: Hitler vs. Stalin. The Eastern Front, 1941-1945, by John Mosier, Simon & Schuster, New York, 470 pages, 2010.

Numerous histories of the titanic 1940s armed struggle between Germany and the Soviet Union have been presented to the mainstream reading public over the last half century or so, and for the most part they follow the same pattern: Germany, led by its mad, greedy-for-conquest Führer, made a surprise attack on the USSR. The Germans made many quick gains and easy victories over an unprepared Russian foe. But as the Russians recovered from their initial unpreparedness, they marshaled their vast resources in manpower and factory production and fought back, gradually forcing the invaders back across the frontiers and ultimately defeating the Nazi menace pretty much single-handed. The Germans became weaker in all areas while the Russians grew ever stronger, making the former's defeat inevitable. The western Allies helped, but it was the Russians who overwhelmingly defeated the Nazi menace. So goes the received script.

A quantity of Soviet documents and reams of statistics seem to back up Stalin's claims as to how the war went. Most western historians have accepted their veracity and routinely cite them, even today in the most recent works, e.g. with David Glantz's numerous studies of the various battles in the east. Earlier historians such as John Erickson did the same, offering their works to be somewhat incestuously drawn upon by later writers, establishing this Stalin-inspired version as writ. Those few historians contradicting this received script have found themselves and their work branded as 'controversial' and their theses and ideas generally rejected or treated with contempt.

John Mosier is one such, whose recent works *The Myth of the Great War*, *The Blitzkrieg Myth*, and *Cross of Iron* have consistently established the point that deeper and more objective research reveals a quite different reality to common presumptions about Germany's two major wars. But his

latest work *Deathride* is bound to land him in serious hot water. The surprises are many. Instead of a mad dictator greedy to conquer the world and making endless blunders, Hitler is presented as a sane and rational man making sensible and very smart decisions, understanding strategy and global politics far better than his generals. Instead of a surprise attack on the innocent Russians, Mosier has concluded that the war was a pre-emptive strike on a predator poised to invade Germany and the rest of Europe. Victor Suvorov—the author of the path-breaking work *Icebreaker* and the later *Chief Culprit*—and Joachim Hoffmann—author of *Stalin's War of Extermination*—are cited respectfully as important sources. That alone

is a major surprise, as most historians either reject their findings with contempt, or simply ignore their work completely. The very idea of assigning real blame for the war to the Soviets instead of to Hitler flies in the face of too many verities, and is usually treated as a taboo.

“The most recent evidence confirms what German interrogations of captured Soviet officers revealed in 1941, that Stalin was in fact planning to attack Hitler at the first opportune moment. For approximately fifty years this idea has been either dismissed as beneath contempt or savagely attacked, despite the fact that it conforms to the pattern of Soviet behavior both before 1939 and after 1945. So the recent evidence contradicts a long established Stalinist legend, and certainly explains



A German Grenadier on the Eastern Front stares into the camera. Was the war between Germany and the Soviet Union begun as a surprise attack by a greedy-for-conquest Führer or a pre-emptive strike on a Soviet predator poised to invade Germany and Europe?

Hitler's motivation: his attack on the Soviet Union was a preemptive strike." (p. 82)

and

"A summary of the key interrogations and the deductions of the interrogators, taken from the Wehrmacht records, is contained in Joachim Hoffmann, Stalin's War of Extermination, 1941-1945: Planning, Realization, Documentation, translated by William Diest (Capshaw, Alabama, Theses and Dissertations Press, 2005), 80-88 [...]. In 1990, Victor Rezhun, a defector who had been an officer in Soviet military intelligence, writing under the pseudonym Suvarov, published Icebreaker: Who Started the Second World War, translated by Thomas Beattie (London, Hamish Hamilton, 1990). He summarized Stalin's plans and offered as proof the dispositions of the Red Army in forward positions (those dispositions are corroborated by the Wehrmacht interrogations also summarized by Hoffmann, Stalin's War of Extermination, 65-70). After the collapse of the USSR, the intentions enumerated in Hoffmann and Suvarov were confirmed, most notably by Pleshakov (Stalin's Folly), but by other Russian scholars as well (see the extensive citation in Stalin's Folly, 285)." (note 49/p. 397)

A common tendency of German generals after the war was to go along with many of these assumptions. They sought to distance themselves from Hitler and National Socialism, presenting him as a sort of pied piper who misled and then forced them into the war. According to this self-serving version, all the things that went wrong were due to Hitler's crazy decisions and meddlings, while all that went right were as a result of the genius of the generals themselves. The objective was firstly to protect their own reputations, secondly to protect the image of the German General Staff, and thirdly to simply survive in post-war Germany and shore up their relationship with the conquerors, particularly the USA, which occupied—and arguably continues to occupy—defeated Germany.

Mosier points out that in nearly all cases, Hitler was right in his decisions while his generals were wrong. The German officer caste was trained to seize major cities and especially capitals, but Hitler understood that modern wars were more economic in nature—conflicts to seize resources both to deny the enemy the ability to wage war while at the same time increasing one's own ability to do so. The author states that Hitler's generals simply could not comprehend this view.

"One of Hitler's accurate complaints about his generals was they understood nothing about 'the economic aspects of warfare'; the generalization could be extended into areas outside of economics." (p. 31)

and

"The army commanders from the very first had envisioned the objective of a war with Russia in a traditional way: destruction of the armies and occupations of the old and new capitals, especially Moscow."

And Mosier citing from Heinz Guderian's *Panzer Leader*:

"[Hitler] said that the raw materials and agriculture of Ukraine were vitally necessary for the future prosecution of the war. He spoke once again of the need of neutralizing the Crimea, 'the Soviet aircraft carrier for attacking the Rumanian oilfields.' For the first time I heard him use the phrase: 'My generals know nothing about the economic aspects of war.' [cited from Panzer Leader, Da Capo edition 1996, p. 200]" (pp. 131-2)

His analysis of the Stalin-inspired Soviet myths is replete with a careful study of both German and Russian records. In his view, the German records are quite accurate and were kept in painstaking detail. Far from a German military growing weaker in both manpower and armor etc. year by year, he demonstrates that it progressively grew stronger in troops, armor, in all forms of effective firepower, and in quality of leadership both tactical and strategic. The Russian resources, presented as limitless and leaping in strength, were steadily diminishing. Their troops were perishing in the tens of millions thanks to Stalin's orders for continual frontal attacks everywhere, while their armor was being steadily 'shredded' by German firepower and tactics. Even the official Soviet statistics of losses and production figures reveal many inconsistencies and anomalies which when coupled with his examination of the far more accurate German figures, enabled Mosier to provide a truer picture of what was happening.

What is revealed is that the casualties on both sides reflected a ratio of about 5:1 favoring the German forces. With a USSR population of about 170 million at that time and a German population of close to 100 million, the Russians could not long sustain a ratio of greater than 2:1. In other words, the attrition rate was bleeding Russia dry in manpower. Hitler understood this and wisely strove to continue the process. Hence his 'stand fast' orders in 1941 and later, causing further attritive combats resulting in tremendous disparities in losses, again favoring Germany.

Armor and firepower production and usage are carefully examined. Mosier shows that while the Soviets claimed wildly huge tank production

figures, not only were the real figures much lower, but the tanks themselves had endless problems. Their operational life was often measured in days or even hours before breakdowns and failures would occur. The Russians produced tanks but not much in the way of spare parts. They produced no recovery vehicles at all, and workshop and repair facilities were almost unknown. The German armor was usually higher in quality and was maintained well, damaged vehicles being quickly recovered and put back into service. The disparities in performance on the battlefield were not much different from the manpower-loss ratios.

Mosier provides a study of other forms of mobile German firepower which strictly speaking were not normally classified as 'armor' as their guns could only be elevated and lowered, lacking moveable turrets. Assault guns, self-propelled artillery, mobile anti-aircraft guns, tank destroyers, and other new weapons were produced in ever greater quantities and deployed in independent units assigned to support infantry or to supplement the *panzer* divisions. Sometimes rejected by *panzer* generals, e.g., Guderian and others, as unwelcome innovations, they were nonetheless tremendously successful in destroying many thousands of Soviet tanks and breaking up troop concentrations, stalling major Soviet offensives time and again while further amplifying the aforesaid loss ratios.

The author shows that the German troops and officers were well-trained and got better at tactics and strategy as the war progressed, while Soviet troops and officers generally remained poorly trained and prepared and even more poorly led. Mosier frankly presents the Soviet military as generally incompetent, continuing to take huge losses and suffer countless major and minor defeats right up to the end of the war. He also takes aim at the reputations of Soviet Marshals Zhukov, Koniev, and others, seeing them as certainly overrated as well as rather dishonest in their own memoirs of the war.

So how could the Soviets have won the war then? Mosier shows how, firstly, the USSR received tremendous amounts of lend-lease and other forms of aid from the USA and Britain. Trucks, aircraft, American tanks, fuel oils, food, all was amply, even hugely provided to the Soviets and indeed saved them from destruction at the hands of the Germans—all contrary to the Stalinist myth that said aid was insignificant and played little or no role in the Red Army's defeat of the Wehrmacht. Secondly, in spite of Stalin's repeated demands for an Allied 'second front' to take the pressure off Russia, in point of fact several such fronts were already draining Germany's resources—a second front in the air over Germany itself, a third front in the Battle of the Atlantic, a fourth front in the war in North Africa

and then Sicily and Italy—all before the fifth front, the D-Day invasion of France in June 1944.

The author conclusively shows that what really gave the Soviets the edge was the steady switching of Germany's best units from the eastern front to other theatres in the west, to the Balkans, to France, to Italy, and elsewhere, in response to real or expected threats from the Allies, units including the famed 'Grossdeutschland' division, the 'Leibstandarte' and other leading SS divisions, and other units possessing the best equipment. The Wehrmacht was ultimately stripped of the firepower it needed in the east and its role then became largely defensive. The Soviet myth of a rock-solid Red Army steadily and victoriously pushing the Germans back everywhere, falls flat on its face in Mosier's analysis.

"Compounding the difficulties of the German commanders was Hitler's determination to respond to perceived threats elsewhere. In August, the German high command, reacting to the Dieppe raid, went into a panic and shifted Germany's premier super-unit, the Leibstandarte armored SS division, to France. In fact, Berlin intended to ship the army's premier combat force, the Grossdeutschland, there as well, and the over-stretched Luftwaffe was diverting valuable resources to the Mediterranean in response to the Allied invasion there. Given the German dependence on tactical airpower, the decision was bad news indeed. The omens for Stalin were favorable." (pp. 209-10)

Operation Zitadelle in summer 1943—also known as the Battle of Kursk—was the last major German offensive in the east. Hitler ordered disengagement at a point where some German generals believed they were poised at a major breakthrough and victory—again in order to switch units to meet threats elsewhere away from Russia. Mosier regards this as an unusual error on Hitler's part, but a decision or set of decisions entirely rational and understandable. Thus, Kursk is often seen as the turning point in the east, a point beyond which Germany's tide there would ebb.

Mosier also draws numerous other interesting conclusions.

Germany's failure to develop and mass-produce a strategic bomber in his view spelled doom for the war against Stalin. However, he makes clear that Germany very nearly completely defeated the Soviets without only in 1941, and that it was only the very generous aid from the USA that enabled the USSR to survive at all, and that with such a bomber the war would likely have been won by Germany anyway.

He believes that the partisan war in Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus was little more than a nuisance to the Germans and never constituted a major

threat. In this regard he points out that most of the Soviet civilian losses during the war were a direct result of Stalin's orders and not German actions per se, as he commanded uprisings and reprisals everywhere behind the lines, most of which were snuffed out by German forces with few losses to themselves but major losses to the Russian partisans.

An interesting and unique conclusion drawn by the author is that the Soviet Union's gigantic manpower losses and physical destruction suffered during the war, ultimately led to the collapse of communism in that country several decades later. If this is so, then Adolf Hitler is the man or agent to be credited with that seminal event. But at the very least, he did in fact prevent most of Europe from being overrun by Stalin's henchmen in 1941—something which almost no one today is willing to admit. (See Mosier's detailed, convincing discussion of the long-term social and economic effects of the manpower losses, pp. 364-367.)

Mosier's close look at the nature of Soviet 'truth' and 'reality', coupled with Stalin's unique style of leadership, is quite revealing. Stalin would typically make a political pronouncement about the war, or the economy, or on production, etc., and his underlings would be expected to then produce reports and statistics, *i.e.* 'facts', affirming Stalin's 'reality'. These then would find their way into the archives, to be later used by historians, journalists, and others seeking to determine wartime numbers and trends—even doubters of the veracity of said material would often use it anyway on the basis of 'there is nothing else to work with', thus reinforcing and perpetuating Stalin's myths. His successors, e.g. Nikita Khrushchev, selectively perpetuated the myths too if they found them useful; thus Khrushchev's famous speeches and statements denouncing Stalin's crimes in the GULAG and 'Great Terror' purges did not extend to a denunciation of the various myths surrounding the 'Great Patriotic War' which remained of use—and still remain of use—to the Russian leadership right down to the present day. Similar myths about World War II serving America's ruling elite, were—and still are—also perpetuated by their beneficiaries.

Stalin himself would not accept contradiction and was infamous for punishing those who gave him unpleasant news. One case involved a major leader in Soviet aviation who pointed out to Stalin that the Red Air Force's aircraft were poorly designed and produced and prone to breakdowns and failure; he was arrested, tortured, and executed—Stalin thus setting a salient example to others. The Marxist-Leninist view of the nature of truth itself reveals it as a political construct whose political objective is always more important than mere actual facts or reality. In an interpretation completely at odds with, and alien to the Western model, the Marxist dictum

‘all things are political’ dictates that fact, history, literature, everything else, must be made to serve the revolutionary goals of Marxism-Leninism. The nature of truth itself thus defined, technically speaking, *i.e.* at least from their point of view, propounds the idea that Marxists are not technically ‘lying’ when fabricating myths and scripts about World War II or how the USSR won the war.

Overall, Mosier’s work is sure to be found refreshing and pleasantly surprising to revisionists. He even cites some material from the IHR’s *Journal of Historical Review*, as well as some of Walter Sanning’s work, both sources heretofore relegated to historiography’s outer margin. This book’s imprint, Simon & Schuster, is top-drawer, at least for purposes of prestige among readers generally, and Mosier’s previous titles seem to have done well in the marketplace. Does this mean that some historians at least, do in fact read and consider the work of revisionists? It must surely be so, inevitably providing a sort of ‘trickle down’ effect in which revisionist themes, interpretations, and even occasionally facts, quietly enter the mainstream.

Or perhaps all this is ephemeral, to be at some point squelched off or silenced. I wonder if John Mosier has tenure at his university, and what sort of flak he is catching from his institution and from his colleagues.

The book unfortunately lacks a bibliography and illustrations, but does have a number of excellent maps and a fine and detailed Notes section.

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PROFILES IN HISTORY

Paul Rassinier

Richard A. Widmann

Paul Rassinier, widely considered to be the father of Holocaust revisionism, is an unlikely man to have earned such a title. He was born on March 18, 1906 in Beaumont, France. Rassinier would never forget the memory of his father, Joseph, a farmer and a veteran of the French colonial army in Tonkin (present-day Vietnam) being mobilized for World War I. Joseph Rassinier refused to take an active role in the War to End All Wars, and rather suffered incarceration in a military prison for his pacifist ideals. Young Paul would also become a dedicated pacifist, a principle that he held to throughout his life.¹

The France of Rassinier's youth was a *mélange* of political movements and ideologies. At the age of 16 Rassinier joined the Communist Party, having been drawn to it by anarchist Victor Serge. Rassinier's flirtation with Communism would not last long. Turning against its tactics, he quickly found himself expelled. His political activities in the years that followed included several attempts at unifying the workers' movement. He joined the Socialist Party in February of 1934.²

By the Summer of 1940, Rassinier would witness France's military collapse and surrender to Nazi Germany. He became one of the founding members of the "Libre-Nord" movement, the French Resistance movement to liberate the northern occupied zone of their country. Even during this difficult time, Rassinier continued to preach the principles of non-violence and pacifism. His ideals were unwelcome to many within the movement and he would find himself condemned to death by members of the Communist resistance.³ His "rescue" from a death sentence came in October of 1943 when he was arrested by the Nazi Gestapo for various activities including the smuggling of Jewish refugees over the Franco-Swiss border. Rassinier was sent to the concentration camp at Buchenwald for his activities. Later he would be moved to Dora where he would stay through the war's end.

After the war, Rassinier returned to his native France and was elected to the *Assemblée Nationale*. He was awarded the highest decoration by the French government for his involvement with the Resistance during the war.

Rassinier, who was trained in history, set out after the war to document his experiences within the German concentration camp system. Rassinier paints a horrible picture of the dead being brought from Dora to Buchenwald for cremation:⁴

“Every day trucks brought full loads of dead bodies from Dora to be cremated at Buchenwald, and it was from the presence of these corpses that the horrors of the camp were deduced.”

Rassinier also details the alarming death rate at Buchenwald due to “[...] bad treatment, the poor and insufficient food, the superhuman workload, the lack of medicines, and [...] pneumonia.”⁵ It was in the period following the publication of his earliest works that he realized that many of the wartime stories other inmates were telling were popular-but-execrable exaggerations. Rassinier wrote:⁶

“Then one day I realized that a false picture of the German camps had been created and that the problem of the concentration camps was a universal one, not just one that could be disposed of by placing it on the doorstep of the National Socialists. The deportees, many of whom were Communists, had been largely responsible for leading international political thinking to such an erroneous conclusion. I suddenly felt that by remaining silent I was an accomplice to a dangerous influence.”

Rassinier began to debunk and deconstruct the works of his fellow inmates. He made a tremendous effort to debunk Raul Hilberg’s *The Destruction of the European Jews*. Rassinier went so far as to predict that in the future, Hilberg’s volume “will not be spoken of at all, or if it is still mentioned, it will only be mentioned in reference to something unworthy of notice except as an example of the most scandalous aberrations of our times.”⁷ It is a sad comment on the power and persistence of the Holocaust-exaggeration campaign, if not on the frailty of the historical process itself, that today most persons concerned with the matter would describe (on the record) Rassinier’s work in the terms he used for Hilberg’s, and vice-versa. Hilberg is today limned as “the dean of Holocaust historiography,” while Rassinier, years-long veteran of the camps though he is, is dismissed as a



*Revisionist pioneer Paul
Rassinier*

"Holocaust denier." However, the future is not over yet. Rassinier's prediction may yet come to pass, if only by one scholar at a time.

By now, Rassinier had become skeptical of the lurid gas-chamber stories which were being circulated. He wrote, "In 1950, it was still too soon to pronounce a definite judgment on the existence of gas chambers in the camps; documents were wanting and those that existed were incomplete, inexact, and obviously apocryphal or falsified."⁸ In the 1964 book *The Drama of the European Jews*, Rassinier's view became more firm:⁹

"With regard to gas chambers, the almost endless procession of false witnesses and of falsified documents to which I have invited the reader's attention during this long study, proves, nevertheless, only one thing: never at any moment did the responsible authorities of the Third Reich intend to order, or in fact order, the extermination of the Jews in this or any other manner. Did such exterminations take place without orders? This question has haunted me for fifteen years."

Rassinier had determined that no widespread gassings took place and that there was no policy to exterminate the Jews of Europe. He also provided historians with the first real quantitative analysis of Jewish wartime deaths. His final total put the range of Jewish deaths for the twelve years of Nazism between 987,592 and 1,589,492.¹⁰ Many years later, Professor Arthur Butz, author of *The Hoax of the Twentieth Century* basically accepted Rassinier's analysis and commented, "I will offer here no definite estimate of Jewish losses. However, I have no strong reason to quarrel with Rassinier's estimate."¹¹

Rassinier would later become even more certain about the falsity of the gas-chamber claims. As a result of his studies, he made the following conclusion in *The Real Eichmann Trial*, "There never were any gas chambers, nor any exterminations by that method at Auschwitz-Birkenau."¹²

By 1960 Rassinier's works were discovered by revisionist pioneer Harry Elmer Barnes. Barnes, who was noted for his trail-blazing work on World War I, had been publishing numerous works to show that a similar situation existed with regard to World War II. Rassinier's books made a tremendous impact on Barnes. Barnes made reference to Rassinier in his article, "Revisionism and Brainwashing" commenting on "the discouragement and smearing of outsiders like the distinguished French historian Paul Rassinier, who sought to expose the exaggerations of the atrocity stories."¹³

By the mid-1960s Barnes had completed having Rassinier's works translated into English. Barnes then ran head-on into the American publishing industry's self-imposed censorship. No publishing house was willing to

publish Rassinier's works. Barnes, never one to be silenced, personally photocopied 40 copies of the typewritten English translations and distributed them to his professional associates.¹⁴

Rassinier passed away on July 29, 1967 at the age of 61. It would be more than ten years before The Noontide Press collected four of his most important works, *The Crossing of the Line*, *The Lie of Ulysses*, *Ulysses Betrayed by His Own*, and *The Drama of the European Jews* and made them available to the English-speaking world.

Notes

- ¹ Online: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_Rassinier, date: 30 Oct. 2010.
- ² Paul Rassinier, *The Real Eichmann Trial, or the Incurable Victims*, Institute for Historical Review, Torrance, Cal., 1983, p. 5
- ³ *Ibid.*
- ⁴ Paul Rassinier, *The Holocaust Story and the Lie of Ulysses*, Institute for Historical Review, Torrance, Cal., 1978, p. 38.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 44.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 109.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 212.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 158.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 270.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 389-90.
- ¹¹ Arthur R. Butz, *The Hoax of the Twentieth Century: The Case against the Presumed Extermination of European Jewry*, Institute for Historical Review, Torrance, Cal., 1985, p. 17.
- ¹² Rassinier, *The Real Eichmann Trial*. p. 98.
- ¹³ Harry Elmer Barnes, *The Barnes Trilogy*. Institute for Historical Review, Torrance, Cal., 1979, p. vi.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. vii.

HOLOCAUST HANDBOOKS

This ambitious, growing series addresses various aspects of the “Holocaust” of the WWII era. Most of them are based on decades of research from archives all over the world. They are heavily referenced. In contrast to most other works on this issue, the tomes of this series approach its topic with profound academic scrutiny and a critical attitude. Any Holocaust researcher ignoring this series will remain oblivious to some of the most important research in the field. These books are designed to both convince the common reader as well as academics. The following books have appeared so far, or are about to be released.

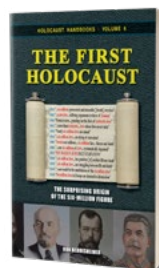
SECTION ONE:

General Overviews of the Holocaust

The First Holocaust. The Surprising Origin of the Six-Million Figure.

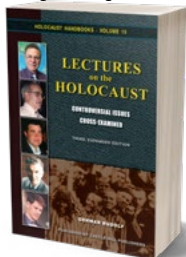
By Don Heddesheimer.

This compact but substantive study documents propaganda spread prior to, during and after the FIRST World War that claimed East European Jewry was on the brink of annihilation. The magic number of suffering and dying Jews was 6 million back then as well. The book details how these Jewish fundraising operations in America raised vast sums in the name of feeding suffering Polish and Russian Jews but actually funneled much of the money to Zionist and Communist groups. 6th ed., 206 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#6)



Lectures on the Holocaust. Controversial Issues Cross Examined.

By Germar Rudolf. This book first explains why “the Holocaust” is an important topic, and that it is essential to keep an open mind about it. It then tells how many mainstream scholars expressed doubts and subsequently fell from grace. Next, the physical traces and documents about the various claimed crime scenes and murder weapons are discussed. After that, the reliability of witness testimony is examined. Finally, the author argues for a free exchange of ideas on this topic. This book gives the most-comprehensive and up-to-date overview of the critical research into the Holocaust. With its dialogue style, it is easy to read, and it can even be used as an encyclopedic compendium. 4th ed., 597 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#15)



Breaking the Spell. The Holocaust, Myth & Reality.

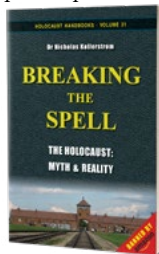
By Nicholas Kollerstrom. In 1941, British Intelligence analysts cracked the German “Enigma” code. Hence, in 1942 and 1943, encrypted radio communications between German concentration camps and the Berlin headquarters were decrypted. The intercepted data



Pictured above are the first 52 volumes of scientific studies that comprise the series *Holocaust Handbooks*. More volumes and new editions are constantly in the works. Check www.HolocaustHandbooks.com for updates.

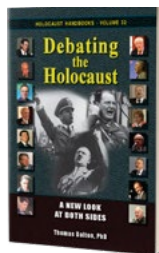
refutes the orthodox “Holocaust” narrative. It reveals that the Germans were desperate to reduce the death rate in their labor camps, which was caused by catastrophic typhus epidemics.

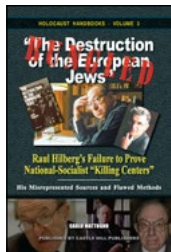
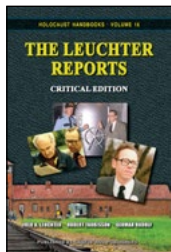
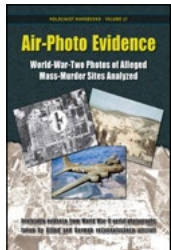
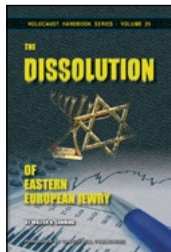
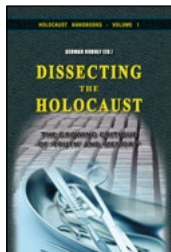
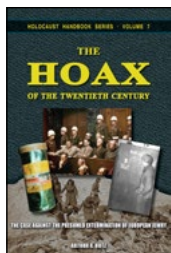
Dr. Kollerstrom, a science historian, has taken these intercepts and a wide array of mostly unchallenged corroborating evidence to show that “witness statements” supporting the human gas chamber narrative clearly clash with the available scientific data. Kollerstrom concludes that the history of the Nazi “Holocaust” has been written by the victors with ulterior motives. It is distorted, exaggerated and largely wrong. With a foreword by Prof. Dr. James Fetzner. 7th ed., 286 pages, b&w ill., bibl., index. (#31)



Debating the Holocaust. A New Look at Both Sides.

By Thomas Dalton. Mainstream historians insist that there cannot be, may not be, any debate about the Holocaust. But ignoring it does not make this controversy go away. Traditional scholars admit that there was neither a budget, a plan, nor an order for the Holocaust; that the key camps have all but vanished, and so have any human remains; that material and unequivocal documentary evidence is absent; and that there are serious problems with survivor testimonies. Dalton juxtaposes the traditional Holocaust narrative with revisionist challenges and then analyzes the mainstream’s responses to them. He reveals the weaknesses of both sides, while declaring revisionism the winner of the current state of the debate.





4th ed., 342 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#32)

The Hoax of the Twentieth Century. The Case against the Presumed Extermination of European Jewry. By Arthur R. Butz. The first writer to analyze the entire Holocaust complex in a precise scientific manner. This book exhibits the overwhelming force of arguments accumulated by the mid-1970s. Butz's two main arguments are: 1. All major entities hostile to Germany must have known what was happening to the Jews under German authority. They acted during the war as if no mass slaughter was occurring. 2. All the evidence adduced to prove any mass slaughter has a dual interpretation, while only the innocuous one can be proven to be correct. This book continues to be a major historical reference work, frequently cited by prominent personalities. This edition has numerous supplements with new information gathered over the last 48 years. 5th ed., 572 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#7)

Dissecting the Holocaust. The Growing Critique of 'Truth' and 'Memory.' Edited by Germar Rudolf. *Dissecting the Holocaust* applies state-of-the-art scientific techniques and classic methods of detection to investigate the alleged murder of millions of Jews by Germans during World War II. In 22 contributions—each of some 30 pages—the 17 authors dissect generally accepted paradigms of the “Holocaust.” It reads as excitingly as a crime novel: so many lies, forgeries and deceptions by politicians, historians and scientists are proven. This is the intellectual adventure of the 21st Century. Be part of it! 4th ed., 611 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#1)

The Dissolution of Eastern European Jewry. By Walter N. Sanning. Six Million Jews died in the Holocaust. Sanning did not take that number at face value, but thoroughly explored European population developments and shifts mainly caused by emigration as well as deportations and evacuations conducted by both Nazis and the Soviets, among other things. The book is based mainly on Jewish, Zionist and mainstream sources. It concludes that a sizeable share of the Jews found missing during local censuses after the Second World War, which were so far counted as “Holocaust victims,” had either emigrated (mainly to Israel or the U.S.) or had been deported by Stalin to Siberian labor camps. 3rd ed., foreword by A.R. Butz, epilogue by Germar Rudolf, and an update by the author containing new insights; 264

pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography (#29).

Air-Photo Evidence: World-War-Two Photos of Alleged Mass-Murder Sites Analyzed. By Germar Rudolf (editor). During World War Two both German and Allied reconnaissance aircraft took countless air photos of places of tactical and strategic interest in Europe. These photos are prime evidence for the investigation of the Holocaust. Air photos of locations like Auschwitz, Majdanek, Treblinka, Babi Yar etc. permit an insight into what did or did not happen there. The author has unearthed many pertinent photos and has thoroughly analyzed them. This book is full of air-photo reproductions and schematic drawings explaining them. According to the author, these images refute many of the atrocity claims made by witnesses in connection with events in the German sphere of influence. 6th edition; with a contribution by Carlo Mattogno. 167 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index (#27).

The Leuchter Reports: Critical Edition. By Fred Leuchter, Robert Faurisson and Germar Rudolf. Between 1988 and 1991, U.S. expert on execution technologies Fred Leuchter wrote four reports on whether the Third Reich operated homicidal gas chambers. The first on Auschwitz and Majdanek became world-famous. Based on various arguments, Leuchter concluded that the locations investigated could never have been “utilized or seriously considered to function as execution gas chambers.” The second report deals with gas-chamber claims for the camps Dachau, Mauthausen and Hartheim, while the third reviews design criteria and operation procedures of execution gas chambers in the U.S. The fourth report reviews Pressac's 1989 tome about Auschwitz. 4th ed., 252 pages, b&w illustrations. (#16)

Bungled: “The Destruction of the European Jews”. Raul Hilberg's Failure to Prove National-Socialist “Killing Centers.” By Carlo Mattogno. Raul Hilberg's magnum opus *The Destruction of the European Jews* is an orthodox standard work on the Holocaust. But how does Hilberg support his thesis that Jews were murdered *en masse*? He rips documents out of their context, distorts their content, misinterprets their meaning, and ignores entire archives. He only refers to “useful” witnesses, quotes fragments out of context, and conceals the fact that his witnesses are lying through their teeth. Lies and deceptions permeate Hil-

berg's book, 302 pages, bibliography, index. (#3)

Jewish Emigration from the Third Reich. By Ingrid Weckert. Current historical writings about the Third Reich claim state it was difficult for Jews to flee from Nazi persecution. The truth is that Jewish emigration was welcomed by the German authorities. Emigration was not some kind of wild flight, but rather a lawfully determined and regulated matter. Weckert's booklet elucidates the emigration process in law and policy. She shows that German and Jewish authorities worked closely together. Jews interested in emigrating received detailed advice and offers of help from both sides. 2nd ed., 130 pages, index. (#12)

Inside the Gas Chambers: The Extermination of Mainstream Holocaust Historiography. By Carlo Mattogno. Neither increased media propaganda or political pressure nor judicial persecution can stifle revisionism. Hence, in early 2011, the Holocaust Orthodoxy published a 400-page book (in German) claiming to refute "revisionist propaganda," trying again to prove "once and for all" that there were homicidal gas chambers at the camps of Dachau, Natzweiler, Sachsenhausen, Mauthausen, Ravensbrück, Neuengamme, Stutthof... you name them. Mattogno shows with his detailed analysis of this work of propaganda that mainstream Holocaust hagiography is beating around the bush rather than addressing revisionist research results. He exposes their myths, distortions and lies. 2nd ed., 280 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#25)

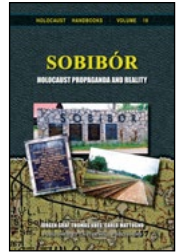
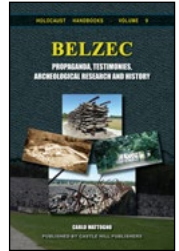
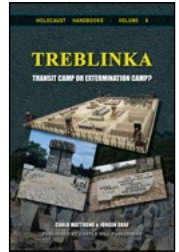
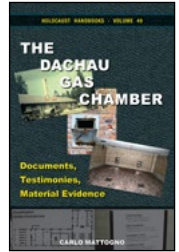
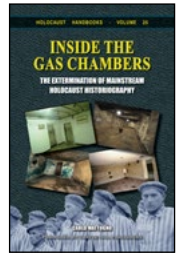
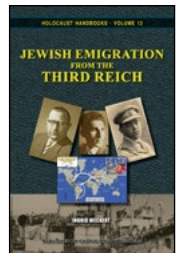
SECTION TWO: Specific non-Auschwitz Studies

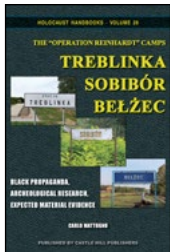
The Dachau Gas Chamber. By Carlo Mattogno. This study investigates whether the alleged homicidal gas chamber at the infamous Dachau Camp could have been operational. Could these gas chambers have fulfilled their alleged function to kill people as assumed by mainstream historians? Or does the evidence point to an entirely different purpose? This study reviews witness reports and finds that many claims are nonsense or technically impossible. As many layers of confounding misunderstandings and misrepresentations are peeled away, we discover the core of what the truth was concerning the existence of these gas chambers. 154 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#49)

Treblinka: Extermination Camp or Transit Camp? By Carlo Mattogno and Jürgen Graf. It is alleged that at Treblinka in East Poland between 700,000 and 3,000,000 persons were murdered in 1942 and 1943. The weapons used were said to have been stationary and/or mobile gas chambers, fast-acting or slow-acting poison gas, unslaked lime, superheated steam, electricity, Diesel-exhaust fumes etc. Holocaust historians alleged that bodies were piled as high as multi-storied buildings and burned without a trace, using little or no fuel at all. Graf and Mattogno have now analyzed the origins, logic and technical feasibility of the official version of Treblinka. On the basis of numerous documents they reveal Treblinka's true identity as a mere transit camp. 3rd ed., 384 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#8)

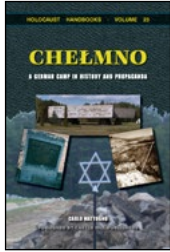
Belzec: Propaganda, Testimonies, Archeological Research and History. By Carlo Mattogno. Witnesses report that between 600,000 and 3 million Jews were murdered in the Belzec Camp, located in Poland. Various murder weapons are claimed to have been used: Diesel-exhaust gas; unslaked lime in trains; high voltage; vacuum chambers; etc. The corpses were incinerated on huge pyres without leaving a trace. For those who know the stories about Treblinka this sounds familiar. Thus, the author has restricted this study to the aspects which are new compared to Treblinka. In contrast to Treblinka, forensic drillings and excavations were performed at Belzec, the results of which are critically reviewed. 142 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#9)

Sobibor: Holocaust Propaganda and Reality. By Jürgen Graf, Thomas Kues and Carlo Mattogno. Between 25,000 and 2 million Jews are said to have been killed in gas chambers in the Sobibór camp in Poland. The corpses were allegedly buried in mass graves and later incinerated on pyres. This book investigates these claims and shows that they are based on the selective use of contradictory eyewitness testimony. Archeological surveys of the camp are analyzed that started in 2000-2001 and carried on until 2018. The book also documents the general National-Socialist policy toward Jews, which never included a genocidal "final solution." In conclusion, Sobibór emerges not as a "pure extermination camp", but as a transit camp from where Jews were deported to the occupied eastern territories. 2nd ed., 460 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#19)

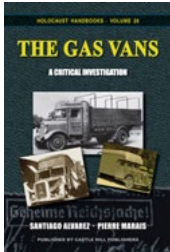




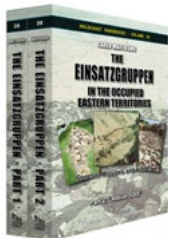
The "Operation Reinhardt" Camps Treblinka, Sobibór, Belzec. By Carlo Mattogno. This study has its first focus on witness testimonies recorded during World War II and the immediate post-war era, many of them discussed here for the first time, thus demonstrating how the myth of the "extermination camps" was created. The second part of this book brings us up to speed with the various archaeological efforts made by mainstream scholars in their attempt to prove that the myth is true. The third part compares the findings of the second part with what we ought to expect, and reveals the chasm between facts and myth. 402 pages, illustrations, bibliography, index. (#28)



Chelmno: A Camp in History & Propaganda. By Carlo Mattogno. At Chelmno, huge masses of Jewish prisoners are said to have been gassed in "gas vans" or shot (claims vary from 10,000 to 1.3 million victims). This study covers the subject from every angle, undermining the orthodox claims about the camp with an overwhelmingly effective body of evidence. Eyewitness statements, gas wagons as extermination weapons, forensics reports and excavations, German documents – all come under Mattogno's scrutiny. Here are the uncensored facts about Chelmno, not the propaganda. This is a complementary volume to the book on *The Gas Vans* (#26). 2nd ed., 188 pages, indexed, illustrated, bibliography. (#23)

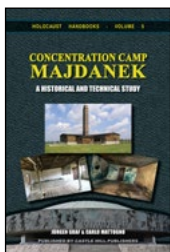


The Gas Vans: A Critical Investigation. By Santiago Alvarez and Pierre Marais. Did the Nazis use mobile gas chambers to exterminate 700,000 people? Are witness statements believable? Are documents genuine? Where are the murder weapons? Could they have operated as claimed? Where are the corpses? In order to get to the truth of the matter, Alvarez has scrutinized all known wartime documents and photos about this topic; he has analyzed a huge amount of witness statements as published in the literature and as presented in more than 30 trials held over the decades in Germany, Poland and Israel; and he has examined the claims made in the pertinent mainstream literature. The result of his research is mind-boggling. Note: This book and Mattogno's book on Chelmno were edited in parallel to make sure they are consistent and not repetitive. 2nd ed., 412 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#26)

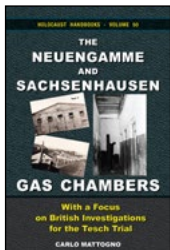


The Einsatzgruppen in the Occupied Eastern Territories: Genesis, Missions and Actions. By C. Mattogno. Before invading the Soviet Union, the German authorities set up special units meant to secure the area behind the German front. Orthodox historians claim that these units called *Einsatzgruppen* primarily engaged in rounding up and mass-murdering Jews. This study sheds a critical light onto this topic by reviewing all the pertinent sources as well as material traces. It reveals on the one hand that original war-time documents do not fully support the orthodox genocidal narrative, and on the other that most post-"liberation" sources such as testimonies and forensic reports are steeped in Soviet atrocity propaganda and are thus utterly unreliable. In addition, material traces of the claimed massacres are rare due to an attitude of collusion by governments and Jewish lobby groups. 2nd ed., 2 vols., 864 pp., b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#39)

Concentration Camp Majdanek. A Historical and Technical Study. By Carlo Mattogno and Jürgen Graf. At war's end, the Soviets claimed that up to two million Jews were murdered at the Majdanek Camp in seven gas chambers. Over the decades, however, the Majdanek Museum reduced the death toll three times to currently 78,000, and admitted that there were "only" two gas chambers. By exhaustively researching primary sources, the authors expertly dissect and repudiate the myth of homicidal gas chambers at that camp. They also critically investigated the legend of mass executions of Jews in tank trenches and prove it groundless. Again they have produced a standard work of methodical investigation which authentic historiography cannot ignore. 3rd ed., 358 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#5)



The Neuengamme and Sachsenhausen Gas Chambers. By Carlo Mattogno and Friedrich Jansson. The Neuengamme Camp near Hamburg, and the Sachsenhausen Camp north of Berlin allegedly had homicidal gas chambers for the mass gassing of inmates. The evaluation of many postwar interrogation protocols on this topic exposes inconsistencies, discrepancies and contradictions. British interrogating techniques are revealed as manipulative, threatening and mendacious. Finally, technical absurdities of gas-chambers and mass-gassing claims unmask these tales as a mere regurgitation of hearsay stories from other



camp, among them foremost Auschwitz. 2nd ed., 238 pages, b&w ill., bibliography, index. (#50)

Concentration Camp Stutthof and Its Function in National Socialist Jewish Policy. By Carlo Mattogno and Jürgen Graf. Orthodox historians claim that the Stutthof Camp near Danzig, East Prussia, served as a “makeshift” extermination camp in 1944, where inmates were killed in a gas chamber. Based mainly on archival resources, this study thoroughly debunks this view and shows that Stutthof was in fact a center for the organization of German forced labor toward the end of World War II. The claimed gas chamber was a mere delousing facility. 4th ed., 170 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#4)

SECTION THREE: Auschwitz Studies

The Making of the Auschwitz Myth: Auschwitz in British Intercepts, Polish Underground Reports and Post-war Testimonies (1941-1947). By Carlo Mattogno. Using messages sent by the Polish underground to London, SS radio messages sent to and from Auschwitz that were intercepted and decrypted by the British, and a plethora of witness statements made during the war and in the immediate postwar period, the author shows how exactly the myth of mass murder in Auschwitz gas chambers was created, and how it was turned subsequently into “history” by intellectually corrupt scholars who cherry-picked claims that fit into their agenda and ignored or actively covered up literally thousands of lies of “witnesses” to make their narrative look credible. 2nd edition, 514 pp., b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#41)

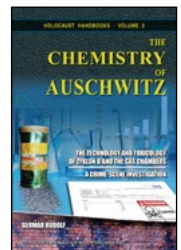
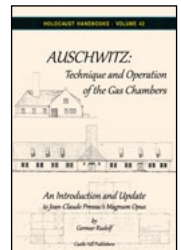
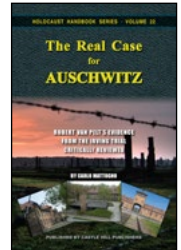
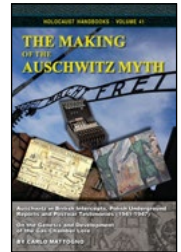
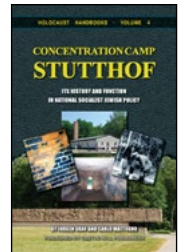
The Real Case of Auschwitz: Robert van Pelt's Evidence from the Irving Trial Critically Reviewed. By Carlo Mattogno. Prof. Robert van Pelt, a mainstream expert on Auschwitz, became famous when appearing as an expert during the London libel trial of David Irving against Deborah Lipstadt. From it resulted a book titled *The Case for Auschwitz*, in which van Pelt laid out his case for the existence of homicidal gas chambers at that camp. This book is a scholarly response to Prof. van Pelt—and Jean-Claude Pressac, upon whose books van Pelt's study is largely based. Mattogno lists all the evidence van Pelt adduces, and shows one by one that van Pelt misrepresented and misinterpreted every single one of them.

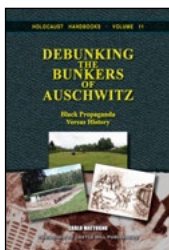
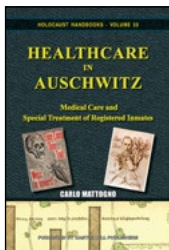
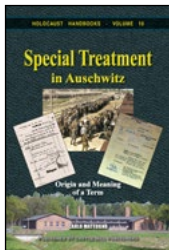
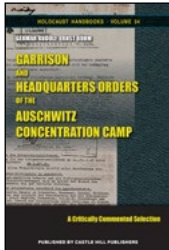
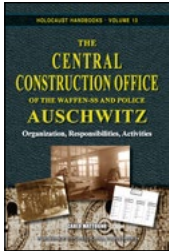
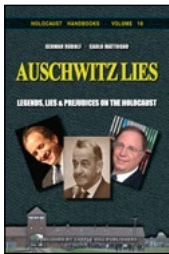
This is a book of prime political and scholarly importance to those looking for the truth about Auschwitz. 3rd ed., 692 pages, b&w illustrations, glossary, bibliography, index. (#22)

Auschwitz: Plain Facts: A Response to Jean-Claude Pressac. Edited by Germar Rudolf, with contributions by Serge Thion, Robert Faurisson and Carlo Mattogno. French pharmacist Jean-Claude Pressac tried to refute revisionist findings with the “technical” method. For this he was praised by the mainstream, and they proclaimed victory over the “revisionists.” In his book, Pressac's works and claims are shown to be unscientific in nature, as he never substantiates what he claims, and historically false, because he systematically misrepresents, misinterprets and misunderstands German wartime documents. 2nd ed., 226 pages, b&w illustrations, glossary bibliography, index. (#14)

Auschwitz: Technique and Operation of the Gas Chambers: An Introduction and Update. By Germar Rudolf. Pressac's 1989 oversize book of the same title was a trail blazer. Its many document reprints are valuable, but Pressac's annotations are now outdated. This book summarizes the most pertinent research results on Auschwitz gained during the past 30 years. With many references to Pressac's epic tome, it serves as an update and correction to it, whether you own an original hard copy of it, read it online, borrow it from a library, purchase a reprint, or are just interested in such a summary in general. 144 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography. (#42)

The Chemistry of Auschwitz: The Technology and Toxicology of Zyklon B and the Gas Chambers – A Crime-Scene Investigation. By Germar Rudolf. This study documents forensic research on Auschwitz, where material traces reign supreme. Most of the claimed crime scenes – the claimed homicidal gas chambers – are still accessible to forensic examination to some degree. This book addresses questions such as: How were these gas chambers configured? How did they operate? In addition, the infamous Zyklon B is examined in detail. What exactly was it? How did it kill? Did it leave traces in masonry that can be found still today? Indeed, it should have, the author concludes, but several sets of analyses show no trace of it. The author also discusses in depth similar forensic research conducted by other scholars. 4th ed., 454 pages, more than 120 color and over 100 b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#2)





Auschwitz Lies: Legends, Lies and Prejudices on the Holocaust. By Carlo Mattogno and Germar Rudolf. The fallacious research and alleged “refutation” of revisionist scholars by French biochemist G. Wellers (attacking Leuchter’s famous report, #16), Polish chemist Dr. J. Markiewicz and U.S. chemist Dr. Richard Green (taking on Rudolf’s chemical research), Dr. John Zimmerman (tackling Mattogno on cremation issues), Michael Shermer and Alex Grobman (trying to prove it all), as well as researchers Keren, McCarthy and Mazal (who turned cracks into architectural features), are exposed for what they are: blatant and easily exposed political lies created to ostracize dissident historians. 4th ed., 420 pages, b&w illustrations, index. (#18)

Auschwitz: The Central Construction Office. By Carlo Mattogno. When Russian authorities granted access to their archives in the early 1990s, the files of the Auschwitz Central Construction Office, stored in Moscow, attracted the attention of scholars researching the history of this camp. This important office was responsible for the planning and construction of the Auschwitz camp complex, including the crematories which are said to have contained the “gas chambers.” This study sheds light into this hitherto hidden aspect of this camp’s history, but also provides a deep understanding of the organization, tasks, and procedures of this office. 2nd ed., 188 pages, b&w illustrations, glossary, index. (#13)

Garrison and Headquarters Orders of the Auschwitz Camp. By Germar Rudolf and Ernst Böhm. A large number of the orders issued by the various commanders of the Auschwitz Camp have been preserved. They reveal the true nature of the camp with all its daily events. There is not a trace in them pointing at anything sinister going on. Quite to the contrary, many orders are in insurmountable contradiction to claims that prisoners were mass murdered, such as the children of SS men playing with inmates, SS men taking friends for a sight-seeing tour through the camp, or having a romantic stroll with their lovers around the camp grounds. This is a selection of the most pertinent of these orders together with comments putting them into their proper historical context. 185 pages, b&w ill., bibl., index (#34)

Special Treatment in Auschwitz: Origin and Meaning of a Term. By Carlo Mattogno. When appearing in German wartime documents, terms like

“special treatment,” “special action,” and others have been interpreted as code words for mass murder. But that is not always true. This study focuses on documents about Auschwitz, showing that, while “special” had many different meanings, not a single one meant “execution.” Hence the practice of deciphering an alleged “code language” by assigning homicidal meaning to harmless documents – a key component of mainstream historiography – is untenable. 2nd ed., 166 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#10)

Healthcare at Auschwitz. By Carlo Mattogno. In extension of the above study on *Special Treatment in Auschwitz*, this study proves the extent to which the German authorities at Auschwitz tried to provide health care for the inmates. Part 1 of this book analyzes the inmates’ living conditions and the various sanitary and medical measures implemented. It documents the vast construction efforts to build a huge inmate hospital inside the Auschwitz-Birkenau Camp. Part 2 explores what happened to registered inmates who were “selected” or subject to “special treatment” while disabled or sick. This study shows that a lot was tried to cure these inmates, especially under the aegis of Garrison Physician Dr. Wirths. Part 3 is dedicated to this very Dr. Wirths. The reality of this caring philanthropist refutes the current stereotype of SS officers. 398 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#33)

Debunking the Bunkers of Auschwitz: Black Propaganda vs. History. By Carlo Mattogno. The “bunkers” at Auschwitz-Birkenau, two former farmhouses just outside the camp’s perimeter, are claimed to have been the first homicidal gas chambers at Auschwitz specifically equipped for this purpose. They supposedly went into operation during the first half of 1942, with thousands of Jews sent straight from deportation trains to these “gas chambers.” However, documents clearly show that all inmates sent to Auschwitz during that time were properly admitted to the camp. No mass murder on arrival can have happened. With the help of other wartime files as well as air photos taken by Allied reconnaissance aircraft in 1944, this study shows that these homicidal “bunkers” never existed, how the rumors about them evolved as black propaganda created by resistance groups in the camp, and how this propaganda was transformed into a false reality by “historians.” 2nd ed.,

292 pages, b&w ill., bibliography, index. (#11)

Auschwitz: The First Gassing. Rumor and Reality. By Carlo Mattogno. The first gassing in Auschwitz is claimed to have occurred on Sept. 3, 1941 in a basement. The accounts reporting it are the archetypes for all later gassing accounts. This study analyzes all available sources about this alleged event. It shows that these sources contradict each other about the event's location, date, the kind of victims and their number, and many more aspects, which makes it impossible to extract a consistent story. Original wartime documents inflict a final blow to this legend and prove without a shadow of a doubt that this legendary event never happened. 4th ed., 262 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#20)

Auschwitz: Crematorium I and the Alleged Homicidal Gassings. By Carlo Mattogno. The morgue of Crematorium I in Auschwitz is said to be the first homicidal gas chamber there. This study analyzes witness statements and hundreds of wartime documents to accurately write a history of that building. Where witnesses speak of gassings, they are either very vague or, if specific, contradict one another and are refuted by documented and material facts. The author also exposes the fraudulent attempts of mainstream historians to convert the witnesses' black propaganda into "truth" by means of selective quotes, omissions, and distortions. Mattogno proves that this building's morgue was never a homicidal gas chamber, nor could it have worked as such. 2nd ed., 152 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#21)

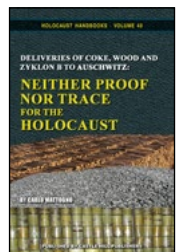
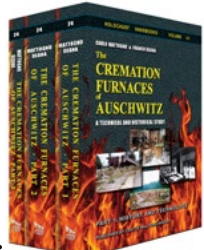
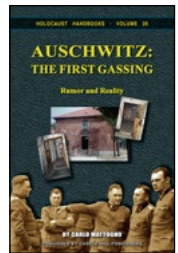
Auschwitz: Open-Air Incinerations. By Carlo Mattogno. In 1944, 400,000 Hungarian Jews were deported to Auschwitz and allegedly murdered in gas chambers. The camp crematoria were unable to cope with so many corpses. Therefore, every single day thousands of corpses are claimed to have been incinerated on huge pyres lit in trenches. The sky was filled with thick smoke, if we believe witnesses. This book examines many testimonies regarding these incinerations and establishes whether these claims were even possible. Using air photos, physical evidence and wartime documents, the author shows that these claims are fiction. A new Appendix contains 3 papers on groundwater levels and cattle mass burnings. 2nd ed., 202 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#17)

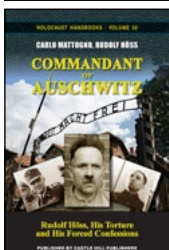
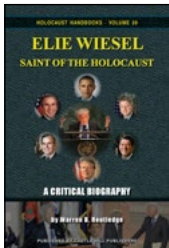
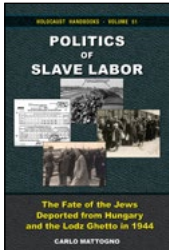
The Cremation Furnaces of Auschwitz. By Carlo Mattogno & Franco Deana. An exhaustive study of the early history and technology of cremation in general and of the cremation furnaces of Auschwitz in particular. On a vast base of technical literature, extant wartime documents and material traces, the authors establish the nature and capacity of these cremation furnaces, showing that these devices were inferior makeshift versions, and that their capacity was lower than normal. The Auschwitz crematoria were not facilities of mass destruction, but installations barely managing to handle the victims among the inmates who died of various epidemics. 2nd ed., 3 vols., 1201 pages, b&w and color illustrations (vols 2 & 3), bibliography, index, glossary. (#24)

Curated Lies: The Auschwitz Museum's Misrepresentations, Distortions and Deceptions. By Carlo Mattogno. Revisionist research results have put the Polish Auschwitz Museum under enormous pressure to answer this challenge. They've answered. This book analyzes their answer. It first exposes the many tricks and lies used by the museum to bamboozle millions of visitors every year regarding its most valued asset, the "gas chamber" in the Main Camp. Next, it reveals how the museum's historians mislead and lie through their teeth about documents in their archives. A long string of completely innocuous documents is mistranslated and misrepresented to make it look like they prove the existence of homicidal gas chambers. 2nd ed., 259 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#38)

Deliveries of Coke, Wood and Zyklon B to Auschwitz: Neither Proof Nor Trace for the Holocaust. By Carlo Mattogno. Researchers from the Auschwitz Museum tried to prove the reality of mass extermination by pointing to documents about deliveries of wood and coke as well as Zyklon B to the Auschwitz Camp. If put into the actual historical and technical context, however, as is done by this study, these documents prove the exact opposite of what those orthodox researchers claim. This study exposes the mendacious tricks with which these museum officials once more deceive the trusting public. 184 pages, b&w illust., bibl., index. (#40)

Mis-Chronicling Auschwitz. Danuta Czech's Flawed Methods, Lies and Deceptions in Her "Auschwitz Chronicle". By Carlo Mattogno. The *Auschwitz Chronicle* is a reference book for the history of the Auschwitz





Camp. It was published in 1990 by Danuta Czech, one of the Auschwitz Museum's most prolific and impactful historians. Analyzing this almost 1,000-page long tome one entry at a time, Mattogno has compiled a long list of misrepresentations, outright lies and deceptions contained in it. They all aim at creating the otherwise unsubstantiated claim that homicidal gas chambers and lethal injections were used at Auschwitz for mass-murdering inmates. This literary mega-fraud needs to be retired from the ranks of Auschwitz sources. 324 pages, b&w illust., bibliography, index. (#47)

The Real Auschwitz Chronicle. By Carlo Mattogno. Nagging is easy. We actually did a better job! That which is missing in Czech's *Chronicle* is included here: day after day of the camp's history, documents are presented showing that it could not have been an extermination camp: tens of thousands of sick and injured inmates were cared for medically with huge efforts, and the camp authorities tried hard to improve the initially catastrophic hygienic conditions. Part Two contains data on transports, camp occupancy and mortality figures. For the first time, we find out what this camp's real death toll was. 2 vols., 906 pp., b&w illustrations (Vol. 2), bibliography, index. (#48)

Politics of Slave Labor: The Fate of the Jews Deported from Hungary and the Lodz Ghetto in 1944. By Carlo Mattogno. The deportation of the Hungarian Jews to Auschwitz in May-July 1944 is said to have been the pinnacle of this camp's extermination frenzy, topped off in August of that year by the extermination of Jews deported from the Lodz Ghetto. This book gathers and explains all the evidence available on both events. In painstaking research, the author proves almost on a person-by-person level what the fate was of many of the Jews deported from Hungary or the Lodz Ghetto. He demonstrates that these Jews were deported to serve as slave laborers in the Third Reich's collapsing war economy. There is no trace of any extermination of any of these Jews. 338 pp., b&w illust., bibliography, index. (#51)

SECTION FOUR: Witness Critique

Elie Wiesel, Saint of the Holocaust: A Critical Biography. By Warren B. Rudolph. This book analyzes several of Wiesel's texts, foremost his

camp autobiography *Night*. The author proves that much of what Wiesel claims can never have happened. It shows how Zionist control has allowed Wiesel and his fellow extremists to force leaders of many nations, the U.N. and even popes to genuflect before Wiesel as symbolic acts of subordination to World Jewry, while at the same time forcing school children to submit to Holocaust brainwashing. This study also shows how parallel to this abuse of power, critical reactions to it also increased: Holocaust revisionism. While Catholics jumped on the Holocaust band wagon, the number of Jews rejecting certain aspect of the Holocaust narrative and its abuse grew as well. This first unauthorized biography of Wiesel exposes both his personal deceits and the whole myth of "the six million." 3rd ed., 458 pages, b&w illustration, bibliography, index. (#30)

Auschwitz: Eyewitness Reports and Perpetrator Confessions. By Jürgen Graf. The traditional narrative of what transpired at the infamous Auschwitz camp during WWII rests almost exclusively on witness testimony from former inmates as well as erstwhile camp officials. This study critically scrutinizes the 30 most important of these witness statements by checking them for internal coherence, and by comparing them with one another as well as with other evidence such as wartime documents, air photos, forensic research results, and material traces. The result is devastating for the traditional narrative. 372 pages, b&w illust., bibl., index. (#36)

Commandant of Auschwitz: Rudolf Höss, His Torture and His Forced Confessions. By Carlo Mattogno & Rudolf Höss. From 1940 to 1943, Rudolf Höss was the commandant of the infamous Auschwitz Camp. After the war, he was captured by the British. In the following 13 months until his execution, he made 85 depositions of various kinds in which he confessed his involvement in the "Holocaust." This study first reveals how the British tortured him to extract various "confessions." Next, all of Höss's depositions are analyzed by checking his claims for internal consistency and comparing them with established historical facts. The results are eye-opening... 2nd ed., 411 pages, b&w illust., bibliography, index. (#35)

An Auschwitz Doctor's Eyewitness Account: The Tall Tales of Dr. Mengele's Assistant Analyzed. By Miklos Nyiszli & Carlo Mattogno.

Nyiszli, a Hungarian physician, ended up at Auschwitz in 1944 as Dr. Mengele's assistant. After the war he wrote a book and several other writings describing what he claimed to have experienced. To this day some traditional historians take his accounts seriously, while others reject them as grotesque lies and exaggerations. This study presents and analyzes Nyiszli's writings and skillfully separates truth from fabulous fabrication. 2nd ed., 484 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#37)

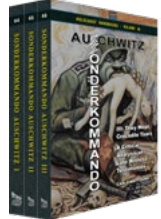
Rudolf Reder versus Kurt Gerstein: Two False Testimonies on the Belzec Camp Analyzed. By Carlo Mattogno. Only two witnesses have ever testified substantially about the alleged Belzec Extermination Camp: The survivor Rudolf Reder and the SS officer Kurt Gerstein. Gerstein's testimonies have been a hotspot of revisionist critique for decades. It is now discredited even among orthodox historians. They use Reder's testimony to fill the void, yet his testimonies are just as absurd. This study thoroughly scrutinizes Reder's various statements, critically revisits Gerstein's various depositions, and then compares these two testimonies which are at once similar in some respects, but incompatible in others. 216 pages, b&w illust., bibliography, index. (#43)

Sonderkommando Auschwitz I: Nine Eyewitness Testimonies Analyzed. By Carlo Mattogno. The 1979 book *Auschwitz Inferno* by alleged former Auschwitz "Sonderkommando" member Filip Müller has a great influence on the perception of Auschwitz by the public and by historians. This book critically analyzes Müller's various post-war statements, which are full of exaggerations, falsehoods and plagiarized text passages. Also scrutinized are the testimonies of eight other claimed former *Sonderkommando* members: D. Paisikovic, S. Jankowski, H. Mandelbaum, L. Nagraba, J. Rosenblum, A. Pilo, D. Fliamenbaum and S. Karolinskij. 304 pages, b&w illust., bibliography, index. (#44)

Sonderkommando Auschwitz II: The False Testimonies by Henryk Tauber and Szlama Dragon. By Carlo Mattogno. Auschwitz survivor and former member of the so-called "Sonderkommando" Henryk Tauber is one of the most important witnesses about the alleged gas chambers inside the crematoria at Auschwitz, because right at the war's end, he made several extremely detailed depositions about it. The same is true for Szlama Dragon, only he claims to have worked at the so-called "bunkers" of Birkenau, two makeshift gas chambers just outside the camp perimeter. This study thoroughly scrutinizes these two key testimonies. 254 pages, b&w illust., bibliography, index. (#45)

Sonderkommando Auschwitz III: They Wept Crocodile Tears. A Critical Analysis of Late Witness Testimonies. By Carlo Mattogno. This book focuses on the critical analysis of witness testimonies on the alleged Auschwitz gas chambers recorded or published in the 1990s and early 2000s, such as J. Sackar, A. Dragon, J. Gabai, S. Chasan, L. Cohen and S. Venezia, among others. 232 pages, b&w illust., bibliography, index. (#46)

Auschwitz Engineers in Moscow: The Soviet Postwar Interrogations of the Auschwitz Cremation-Furnace Engineers. By Carlo Mattogno and Jürgen Graf. After the war, the Soviets arrested four leading engineers of the Topf Company. Among other things, they had planned and supervised the construction of the Auschwitz cremation furnaces and the ventilation systems of the rooms said to have served as homicidal gas chambers. Between 1946 and 1948, Soviet officials conducted numerous interrogations with them. This work analyzes them by putting them into the context of the vast documentation on these and related facilities. The appendix contains all translated interrogation protocols. 254 pages, b&w illust., bibliography, index. (#52)



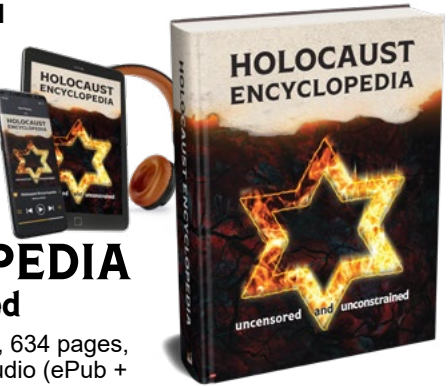
For current prices and availability, and to learn more, go to www.HolocaustHandbooks.com – for example by simply scanning the QR code on the right.



Three decades of unflagging archival and forensic research by the world's most knowledgeable, courageous and prodigious Holocaust scholars have finally coalesced into a reference book that makes all this knowledge readily accessible to everyone:

HOLOCAUST ENCYCLOPEDIA **uncensored and unconstrained**

Available as paperback or hardcover, b&w or color, 634 pages, 8.5"×11"; as eBook (ePub or PDF) and eBook + audio (ePub + mp3); more than 350 illustrations in 579 entries; introduction, bibliography, index. **Online at www.NukeBook.org**



We all know the basics of “The Holocaust.” But what about the details? Websites and printed encyclopedias can help us there. Take the 4-volume encyclopedia by Israel’s Yad Vashem Center: *The Encyclopedia of the Holocaust* (1990). For every significant crime scene, it presents a condensed narrative of Israel’s finest Holocaust scholars. However, it contains not one entry about witnesses and their stories, even though they are the foundation of our knowledge. When a murder is committed, the murder weapon and the crime’s traces are of crucial importance. Yet Yad Vashem’s encyclopedia has no entries explaining scientific findings on these matters – not one.

This is where the present encyclopedia steps in. It not only summarizes and explains the many pieces that make up the larger Holocaust picture. It also reveals the evidence that confirms or contradicts certain notions. Nearly 300 entries present the essence of important witness accounts, and they are subjected to source criticism. This enables us to decide which witness claims are credible.

For all major crime scenes, the sometimes-conflicting claims are presented. We learn how our knowledge has changed over time, and what evidence shores up the currently valid

narrative of places such as Auschwitz, Belzec, Sobibór, Treblinka, Dachau and Bergen-Belsen and many more.

Other entries discuss tools and mechanisms allegedly used for the mass murders, and how the crimes’ traces were erased, if at all. A few entries discuss toxicological issues surrounding the various lethal gases claimed to have been used.

This encyclopedia has multiple entries on some common claims about aspects of the Holocaust, including a list of “Who said it?” This way we can quickly find proof for these claims.

Finally, several entries address factors that have influenced the creation of the Holocaust narrative, and how we perceive it today. This includes entries on psychological warfare and wartime propaganda; on conditions prevailing during investigations and trials of alleged Holocaust perpetrators; on censorship against historical dissidents; on the religious dimension of the Holocaust narrative; and on motives of all sides involved in creating and spreading their diverse Holocaust narratives.

In this important volume, now with 579 entries, you will discover many astounding aspects of the Holocaust narrative that you did not even know exist.

BOOKS ON HISTORY, THE HOLOCAUST AND FREE SPEECH

On the next six pages, we list some of the books available from ARMREG that are not part of the series *Holocaust Handbooks*. For our current range of products, visit our web store at www.ARMREG.co.uk.

Inconvenient History, Annual Volumes 1 through 15.

For more than 15 years now, the revisionist online journal *Inconvenient History* has been the main publishing platform for authors of the revisionist school of historical thought. *Inconvenient History* seeks to maintain the true spirit of the historical revisionist movement; a movement that was established primarily to foster peace through an objective understanding of the causes of modern warfare. After a long absence from the print-book market, we are finally putting all volumes back in print. Various page ranges, pb, 6"×9", illustrated.

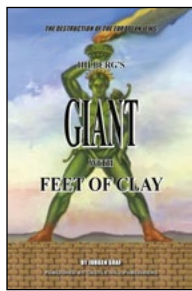
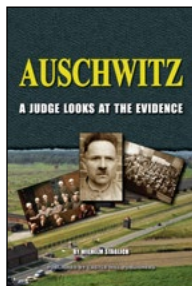
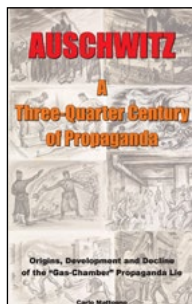
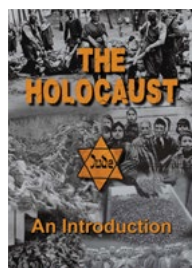
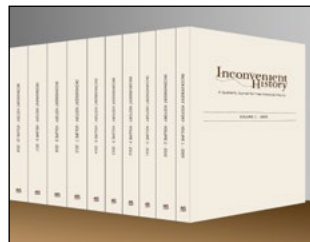
The Holocaust: An Introduction. By Thomas Dalton. The Holocaust was perhaps the greatest crime of the 20th Century. Six million Jews, we are told, died by gassing, shooting, and deprivation. But: Where did the six-million figure come from? How, exactly, did the gas chambers work? Why do we have so little physical evidence from major death camps? Why haven't we found even a fraction of the six million bodies, or their ashes? Why has there been so much media suppression and governmental censorship on this topic? In a sense, the Holocaust is the greatest murder mystery in history. It is a topic of greatest importance for the present day. Let's explore the evidence, and see where it leads. 128 pp. pb, 6"×9", ill., bibl., index.

Auschwitz: A Three-Quarter Century of Propaganda: Origins, Development and Decline of the "Gas Chamber" Propaganda Lie. By Carlo Mattogno. Wild rumors were circulating about Auschwitz during WWII: Germans testing war gases; mass murder in electrocution chambers, with gas showers or pneumatic hammers; living people sent on conveyor belts into furnaces; grease and soap made of the victims. Nothing of it was true. When the Soviets captured Auschwitz in early 1945, they reported that 4 million inmates were killed on electrocution conveyor belts discharging their load directly into furnaces. That wasn't true either. After the war, "witnesses" and "experts" added more claims: mass

murder with gas bombs, gas chambers made of canvas; crematoria burning 400 million victims... Again, none of it was true. This book gives an overview of the many rumors and lies about Auschwitz today rejected as untrue, and exposes the ridiculous methods that turned some claims into "history," although they are just as untrue. 125 pp. pb, 6"×9", ill., bibl., index, b&w ill.

Auschwitz: A Judge Looks at the Evidence. By Wilhelm Stäglich. Auschwitz is the epicenter of the Holocaust, where more people are said to have been murdered than anywhere else. The most important evidence for this claim was presented during two trials: the International Military Tribunal of 1945/46, and the German Auschwitz Trial of 1963-1965. In this book, Wilhelm Stäglich, a former German judge, reveals the incredibly scandalous way in which Allied victors and German courts bent and broke the law in order to come to politically foregone conclusions. Stäglich also exposes the superficial way in which historians are dealing with the many incongruities and discrepancies of the historical record. 3rd edition 2015, 422 pp. pb, 6"×9", b&w ill.

Hilberg's Giant with Feet of Clay. By Jürgen Graf. Raul Hilberg's major work *The Destruction of the European Jews* is generally considered the standard work on the Holocaust. The critical reader might ask: what evidence does Hilberg provide to back his thesis that there was a German plan to exterminate Jews, to be carried out in the legendary gas chambers? And what evidence supports his estimate of 5.1 million Jewish victims? Jürgen Graf applies the methods of critical analysis to Hilberg's evidence, and examines the results in the light of revisionist historiography. The results of Graf's critical analysis are devastating for Hilberg. Graf's analysis is the first comprehensive and systematic examination of the leading spokes-



person for the orthodox version of the Jewish fate during the Third Reich. 3rd edition 2022, 182 pp. pb, 6"x9", b&w ill.

Exactitude: Festschrift for Prof. Dr. Robert Faurisson. By R.H. Countess, C. Lindtner, G. Rudolf (eds.) Faurisson probably deserves the title of the most-courageous intellectual of the 20th and the early 21st Century. With bravery and steadfastness, he challenged the dark forces of historical and political fraud with his unrelenting exposure of their lies and hoaxes surrounding the orthodox Holocaust narrative. This book describes and celebrates the man and his work dedicated to accuracy and marked by in-submission. 146 pp. pb, 6"x9", b&w ill.

Auschwitz – Forensically Examined. By Cyrus Cox. Modern forensic crime-scene investigations can reveal a lot about the Holocaust. There are many big tomes about this. But if you want it all in a nutshell, read this booklet. It condenses the most-important findings of Auschwitz forensics into a quick and easy read. In the first section, the forensic investigations conducted so far are reviewed. In the second section, the most-important results of these studies are summarized. The main arguments focus on two topics. The first centers around the poison allegedly used at Auschwitz for mass murder: Zyklon B. Did it leave any traces in masonry where it was used? Can it be detected to this day? The second topic deals with mass cremations. Did the crematoria of Auschwitz have the claimed huge capacity? Do air photos taken during the war confirm witness statements on huge smoking pyres? This book gives the answers, together with many references to source material and further reading. The third section reports on how the establishment has reacted to these research results. 2nd ed., 128 pp. pb., b&w ill., bibl., index.

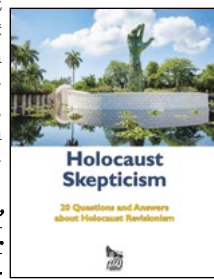
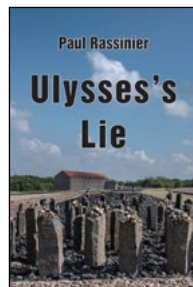
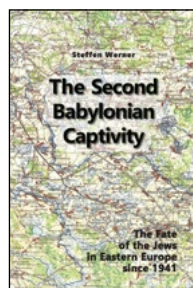
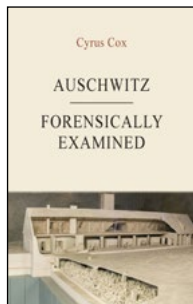
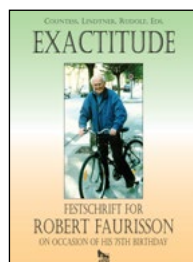
Ulysses's Lie. By Paul Rassiner. Holocaust revisionism began with this book: Frenchman Rassiner, a pacifist and socialist, was sent first to Buchenwald Camp in 1944, then to Dora-Mittelbau. Here he reports from his own experience how the prisoners turned each other's imprisonment into hell without being forced to do so. In the second part, Rassiner analyzes the

books of former fellow prisoners, and shows how they lied and distorted in order to hide their complicity. First complete English edition, including Rassiner's prologue, Albert Paraz's preface, and press reviews. 270 pp, 6"x9" pb, bibl, index.

The Second Babylonian Captivity: The Fate of the Jews in Eastern Europe since 1941. By Steffen Werner. "But if they were not murdered, where did the six million deported Jews end up?" This objection demands a well-founded response. While researching an entirely different topic, Werner stumbled upon peculiar demographic data of Belorussia. Years of research subsequently revealed more evidence which eventually allowed him to propose: The Third Reich did indeed deport many of the Jews of Europe to Eastern Europe in order to settle them there "in the swamp." This book shows what really happened to the Jews deported to the East by the National Socialists, how they have fared since. It provides context for hitherto-obscure historical events and obviates extreme claims such as genocide and gas chambers. With a preface by Germar Rudolf. 190 pp. pb, 6"x9", b&w ill., bibl., index

Holocaust Skepticism: 20 Questions and Answers about Holocaust Revisionism. By Germar Rudolf. This 15-page brochure introduces the novice to the concept of Holocaust revisionism, and answers 20 tough questions, among them: What does Holocaust revisionism claim? Why should I take Holocaust revisionism more seriously than the claim that the earth is flat? How about the testimonies by survivors and confessions by perpetrators? What about the pictures of corpse piles in the camps? Why does it matter how many Jews were killed by the Nazis, since even 1,000 would have been too many? ... Glossy full-color brochure. PDF file free of charge available at www.armreg.co.uk. This item is not copyright-protected. Hence, you can do with it whatever you want: download, post, email, print, multiply, hand out, sell, drop it accidentally in a bookstore... 19 pp., 8.5"x11", full-color throughout.

Bungled: "Denying the Holocaust" How Deborah Lipstadt Botched Her Attempt to Demonstrate the Grow-



ing Assault on Truth and Memory. By Germar Rudolf. With her book *Denying the Holocaust*, Deborah Lipstadt tried to show the flawed methods and extremist motives of “Holocaust deniers.” This book demonstrates that Dr. Lipstadt clearly has neither understood the principles of science and scholarship, nor has she any clue about the historical topics she is writing about. She misquotes, mistranslates, misrepresents, misinterprets, and makes a plethora of wild claims without backing them up with anything. Rather than dealing thoroughly with factual arguments, Lipstadt’s book is full of *ad hominem* attacks on her opponents. It is an exercise in anti-intellectual pseudo-scientific arguments, an exhibition of ideological radicalism that rejects anything which contradicts its preset conclusions. **F for FAIL.** 2nd ed., 224 pp. pb, 6”x9”, bibl., index, b&w ill.

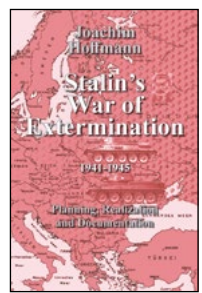
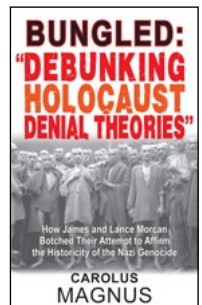
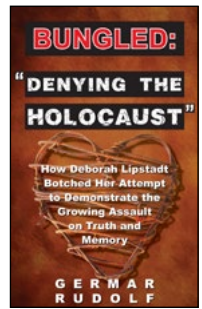
Bungled: “Denying History”. How M. Shermer and A. Grobman Botched Their Attempt to Refute Those Who Say the Holocaust Never Happened. By Carolus Magnus (C. Mattogno). *Skeptic Magazine* editor Michael Shermer and Alex Grobman from the Simon Wiesenthal Center wrote a book claiming to be “a thorough and thoughtful answer to all the claims of the Holocaust deniers.” As this book shows, however, Shermer and Grobman completely ignored almost all the “claims” made in the more than 10,000 pages of more-recent cutting-edge revisionist archival and forensic research. Furthermore, they piled up a heap of falsifications, contortions, omissions and fallacious interpretations of the evidence. Finally, what the authors claim to have demolished is not revisionism but a ridiculous parody of it. They ignored the known unreliability of their cherry-picked selection of evidence, utilized unverified and incestuous sources, and obscured the massive body of research and all the evidence that dooms their project to failure. 162 pp. pb, 6”x9”, bibl., index, b&w ill.

Bungled: “Debunking Holocaust Denial Theories”. How James and Lance Morcan Botched Their Attempt to Affirm the Historicity of the Nazi Genocide. By Carolus Magnus. The novelists and movie-makers James and

Lance Morcan have produced a book “to end [Holocaust] denial once and for all” by disproving “the various arguments Holocaust deniers use to try to discredit wartime records.” It’s a lie. First, the Morcans completely ignored the vast amount of recent scholarly studies published by revisionists; they don’t even mention them. Instead, they engage in shadowboxing, creating some imaginary, bogus “revisionist” scarecrow which they then tear to pieces. In addition, their knowledge even of their own side’s source material is dismal, and the way they back up their misleading or false claims is pitifully inadequate. 144 pp. pb, 6”x9”, bibl., index, b&w ill.

Stalin’s War of Extermination 1941-1945. By Joachim Hoffmann. A German government historian documents Stalin’s murderous war against the German army and the German people. Based on the author’s lifelong study of German and Russian military records, this book reveals the Red Army’s grisly record of atrocities against soldiers and civilians, as ordered by Stalin. Since the 1920s, Stalin planned to invade Western Europe to initiate the “World Revolution.” He prepared an attack which was unparalleled in history. The Germans noticed Stalin’s aggressive intentions, but they underestimated the strength of the Red Army. What unfolded was the cruelest war in history. This book shows how Stalin and his Bolshevik henchman used unimaginable violence and atrocities to break any resistance in the Red Army and to force their unwilling soldiers to fight against the Germans. The book explains how Soviet propagandists incited their soldiers to unlimited hatred against everything German, and he gives the reader a short but extremely unpleasant glimpse into what happened when these Soviet soldiers finally reached German soil in 1945: A gigantic wave of looting, arson, rape, torture, and mass murder... **428 pp. pb, 6”x9”, bibl., index, b&w ill.**

Who Started World War II: Truth for a War-Torn World. By Udo Walendy. For seven decades, mainstream historians have insisted that Germany was the main, if not the sole culprit for unleashing World War II in Europe. In the present book this myth is refuted. There is available to the



public today a great number of documents on the foreign policies of the Great Powers before September 1939 as well as a wealth of literature in the form of memoirs of the persons directly involved in the decisions that led to the outbreak of World War II. Together, they made possible Walendy's present mosaic-like reconstruction of the events before the outbreak of the war in 1939. This book has been published only after an intensive study of sources, taking the greatest care to minimize speculation and inference. The present edition has been translated completely anew from the German original and has been slightly revised. 500 pp. pb, 6"x9", index, bibl., b&w ill.

The Day Amazon Murdered Free Speech. By Germar Rudolf. Amazon is the world's biggest book retailer. They dominate the U.S. and several foreign markets. Pursuant to the 1998 declaration of Amazon's founder Jeff Bezos to offer "the good, the bad and the ugly," customers once could buy every title that was in print and was legal to sell. However, in early 2017, a series of anonymous bomb threats against Jewish community centers occurred in the U.S., fueling a campaign by Jewish groups to coax Amazon into banning revisionist writings. On March 6, 2017, Amazon caved in and banned more than 100 books with dissenting viewpoints on the Holocaust. In April 2017, an Israeli Jew was arrested for having placed the fake bomb threats. But Amazon kept its new censorship policy: They next culled any literature critical of Jews or Judaism; then they enforced these bans at all its subsidiaries, such as AbeBooks and The Book Depository; then they banned books other pressure groups don't like; finally, they bullied Ingram, who has a book-distribution monopoly in the US, to enforce the same rules by banning from the entire world-wide book market all books Amazon doesn't like... 3rd ed., 158 pp. pb, 6"x9", bibl., color illustrations throughout.

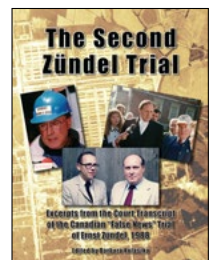
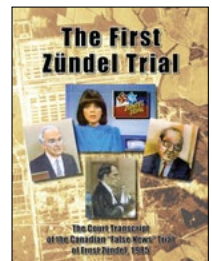
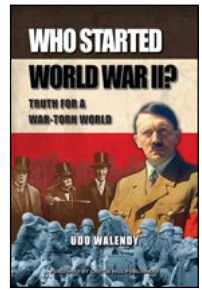
The First Zündel Trial: The Transcript. In the early 1980s, Ernst Zündel, a German living in Toronto, was indicted for allegedly spreading "false news" by selling copies of Harwood's brochure *Did Six Million Really Die?*, which challenged the accuracy of the orthodox Holocaust narrative. When

the case went to court in 1985, so-called Holocaust experts and "eyewitnesses" of the alleged homicidal gas chambers at Auschwitz were cross-examined for the first time in history by a competent and skeptical legal team. The results were absolutely devastating for the Holocaust orthodoxy. For decades, these mind-boggling trial transcripts were hidden from public view. Now, for the first time, they have been published in print in this new book – unabridged and unedited. 820 pp. pb, 8.5"x11"

The Holocaust on Trial: The Second Trial against Ernst Zündel 1988. By Ernst Zündel. In 1988, the appeal trial of Ernst Zündel for "knowingly spreading false news about the Holocaust" took place in Toronto. This book is introduced by a brief autobiographic summary of Zündel's early life, and an overview of the evidence introduced during the First Zündel Trial. This is followed by a detailed summary of the testimonies of all the witnesses who testified during the Second Zündel Trial. This was the most-comprehensive and -competent argument ever fought in a court of law over the Holocaust. The arguments presented have fueled revisionism like no other event before, in particular Fred Leuchter's expert report on the gas chambers of Auschwitz and Majdanek, and the testimony of British historian David Irving. Critically annotated edition with a foreword by Germar Rudolf. 410 pp. pb, 6"x9", index.

The Second Zündel Trial: Excerpts from the Transcript. By Barbara Kulaszka (ed.). In contrast to Ernst Zündel's book *The Holocaust on Trial* (see earlier description), this book focuses entirely on the Second Zündel Trial by exclusively quoting, paraphrasing and summarizing the entire trial transcript... 498 pp. pb, 8.5"x11", bibl., index, b&w ill.

Resistance Is Obligatory! By Germar Rudolf. In 2005, Rudolf, dissident publisher of revisionist literature, was kidnapped by the U.S. government and deported to Germany. There a show trial was staged. Rudolf was not permitted to defend his historical opinions. Yet he defended himself anyway: Rudolf gave a 7-day speech-proving that only the revisionists are scholarly in their approach, whereas



the Holocaust orthodoxy is merely pseudo-scientific. He then explained why it is everyone's obligation to resist, without violence, a government which throws peaceful dissidents into dungeons. When Rudolf tried to publish his defence speech as a book, the public prosecutor initiated a new criminal investigation against him. After his probation time ended in 2011, he dared publish this speech anyway... 2nd ed. 2016, 378 pp. pb, 6"x9", b&w ill.

Hunting Germar Rudolf: Essays on a Modern-Day Witch Hunt. By Germar Rudolf. German-born revisionist activist, author and publisher Germar Rudolf describes which events made him convert from a Holocaust believer to a Holocaust skeptic, quickly rising to a leading personality within the revisionist movement. This in turn unleashed a tsunami of persecution against him: lost his job, denied his PhD exam, destruction of his family, driven into exile, slandered by the mass media, literally hunted, caught, put on a show trial where filing motions to introduce evidence is illegal under the threat of further prosecution, and finally locked up in prison for years for nothing else than his peaceful yet controversial scholarly writings. In several essays, Rudolf takes the reader on a journey through an absurd world of government and societal persecution which most of us could never even fathom actually exists in a "Western democracy"... 304 pp. pb, 6"x9", bibl., index, b&w ill.

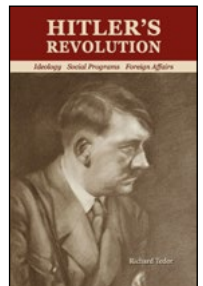
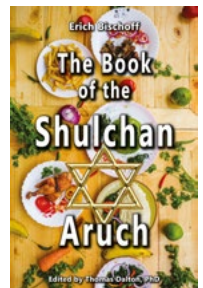
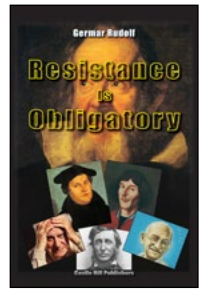
The Book of the Shulchan Aruch. By Erich Bischoff. Most people have heard of the Talmud-that compendium of Jewish laws. The Talmud, however, is vast and largely inscrutable. Fortunately, back in the mid-1500s, a Jewish rabbi created a condensed version of it: the Shulchan Aruch. A fair number of passages in it discuss non-Jews. The laws of Judaism hold Gentiles in very low regard; they can be cheated, lied to, abused, even killed, if it serves Jewish interests. Bischoff, an expert in Jewish religious law, wrote a summary and analysis of this book. He shows us many dark corners of the Jewish religion. 152 pp. pb, 6"x9".

Hitler's Revolution: Ideology, Social Programs, Foreign Affairs. By Richard Tedor. Defying all boycotts, Adolf

Hitler transformed Germany from a bankrupt state to the powerhouse of Europe within just four years, thus becoming Germany's most popular leader ever. How was this possible? This study tears apart the dense web of calumny surrounding this controversial figure. It draws on nearly 200 published German sources, many from the Nazi era, as well as documents from British, U.S., and Soviet archives that describe not only what Hitler did but, more importantly, why he did it. These sources also reveal the true war objectives of the democracies – a taboo subject for orthodox historians – and the resulting world war against Germany. This book is aimed at anyone who feels that something is missing from conventional accounts. 2nd ed., 309 pp. pb, 6"x9", index, bibl.

Hitler on the Jews. By Thomas Dalton. That Adolf Hitler spoke out against the Jews is beyond obvious. But of the thousands of books and articles written on Hitler, virtually none quotes Hitler's exact words on the Jews. The reason for this is clear: Those in positions of influence have incentives to present a simplistic picture of Hitler as a blood-thirsty tyrant. However, Hitler's take on the Jews is far more complex and sophisticated. In this book, for the first time, you can make up your own mind by reading nearly every idea that Hitler put forth about the Jews, in considerable detail and in full context. This is the first book ever to compile his remarks on the Jews. As you will discover, Hitler's analysis of the Jews, though hostile, is erudite, detailed, and – surprise, surprise – largely aligns with events of recent decades. There are many lessons here for the modern-day world to learn. 200 pp. pb, 6"x9", index, bibl.

Goebbels on the Jews. By Thomas Dalton. From the age of 26 until his death in 1945, Joseph Goebbels kept a near-daily diary. It gives us a detailed look at the attitudes of one of the highest-ranking men in Nazi Germany. Goebbels shared Hitler's dislike of the Jews, and likewise wanted them removed from the Reich. Ultimately, Goebbels and others sought to remove the Jews completely from Europe—perhaps to the island of Madagascar. This would be the "final solution" to the Jewish Question. Nowhere in the



diary does Goebbels discuss any Hitler order to kill the Jews, nor is there any reference to extermination camps, gas chambers, or any methods of systematic mass-murder. Goebbels acknowledges that Jews did indeed die by the thousands; but the range and scope of killings evidently fall far short of the claimed figure of 6 million. This book contains, for the first time, every significant diary entry relating to the Jews or Jewish policy. Also included are partial or full transcripts of 10 major essays by Goebbels on the Jews. 274 pp. pb, 6"x9", index, bibl.

The Jewish Hand in the World Wars.

By Thomas Dalton. For many centuries, Jews have had a negative reputation in many countries. The reasons given are plentiful, but less-well-known is their involvement in war. When we examine the causal factors for wars, and look at their primary beneficiaries, we repeatedly find a Jewish presence. Throughout history, Jews have played an exceptionally active role in promoting and inciting wars. With their long-notorious influence in government, we find recurrent instances of Jews promoting hard-line stances, being uncompromising, and actively inciting people to hatred. Jewish misanthropy, rooted in Old Testament mandates, and combined with a ruthless materialism, has led them, time and again, to instigate warfare if it served their larger interests. This fact explains much about the present-day world. In this book, Thomas Dalton examines in detail the Jewish hand in the two world wars. Along the way, he dissects Jewish motives and Jewish strategies for maximizing gain amidst warfare, reaching back centuries. 2nd ed., 231 pp. pb, 6"x9", index, bibl.

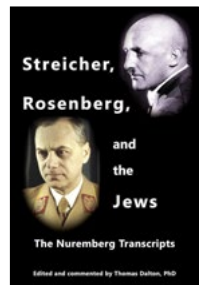
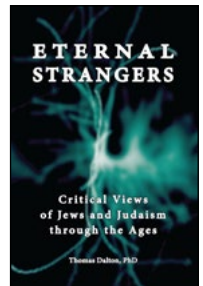
Eternal Strangers: Critical Views of Jews and Judaism through the Ages.

By Thomas Dalton. It is common

knowledge that Jews have been disliked for centuries. But why? Our best hope for understanding this recurrent 'anti-Semitism' is to study the history: to look at the actual words written by prominent critics of the Jews, in context, and with an eye to any common patterns that might emerge. Such a study reveals strikingly consistent observations: Jews are seen in very negative, yet always similar terms. The persistence of such comments is remarkable and strongly suggests that the cause for such animosity resides in the Jews themselves—in their attitudes, their values, their ethnic traits and their beliefs.. This book addresses the modern-day "Jewish problem" in all its depth—something which is arguably at the root of many of the world's social, political and economic problems. 186 pp. pb, 6"x9", index, bibl.

Streicher, Rosenberg, and the Jews: The Nuremberg Transcripts.

By Thomas Dalton. Who, apart from Hitler, contrived the Nazi view on the Jews? And what were these master ideologues thinking? During the post-war International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg, the most-interesting men on trial regarding this question were two with a special connection to the "Jewish Question": Alfred Rosenberg and Julius Streicher. The cases against them, and their personal testimonies, examined for the first time nearly all major aspects of the Holocaust story: the "extermination" thesis, the gas chambers, the gas vans, the shootings in the East, and the "6 million." The truth of the Holocaust has been badly distorted for decades by the powers that be. Here we have the rare opportunity to hear firsthand from two prominent figures in Nazi Germany. Their voices, and their verbatim transcripts from the IMT, lend some much-needed clarity to the situation. 330 pp. pb, 6"x9", index, bibl.



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